United Nations S/PV.7390

Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7390th meeting
Tuesday, 24 February 2015, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Liu Jieyi	(China)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	Chad	Mrs. Alingue
	Chile	Mr. Olguín Cigarroa
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Jordan	Mr. Omaish
	Lithuania	Ms. Murmokaitė
	Malaysia	Mrs. Adnin
	New Zealand	Mrs. Schwalger
	Nigeria	Mr. Laro
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Spain	Mr. González de Linares Palou
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Suárez Moreno

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

Letter dated 20 February 2015 from the Panel of Experts on Yemen established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014) addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2015/125)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

15-04985 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

Letter dated 20 February 2015 from the Panel of Experts on Yemen established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014) addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2015/125)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2015/126, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/125, which contains a letter dated 20 February 2015 from the Panel of Experts on Yemen established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014) addressed to the President of the Security Council.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Angola, Chad, Chile, China, France, Jordan, Lithuania, Malaysia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2204 (2015).

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 10.10 a.m.

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	Malaysia	Mrs. Adnin
	New Zealand	Mrs. Schwalger
	Nigeria	Mr. Laro
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Spain	Mr. González de Linares
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant/Mr. Meek
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

Briefing by the Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

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15-04991 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Briefing by the Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Mr. Ivica Dačić, Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I give the floor to Mr. Dačić.

Mr. Dačić (*spoke in Serbian; English text provided by the delegation*): I am honoured to have the opportunity to address the Security Council in my capacity as Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the world's largest regional security arrangement under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. In doing so, I shall present to the Council the main points of Serbia's OSCE chairmanship agenda. I shall also brief members on a number of other issues of critical importance to peace and security in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian regions.

Serbia's chairmanship of the OSCE comes during the worst European security crisis since the end of the Cold War. Mistrust and divisions, confrontational policies and zero-sum logic are undermining the cooperative approach to security that is at the heart of the OSCE's comprehensive body of commitments and principles.

The OSCE of 2015 is very different from the OSCE of just two years ago. The crisis in and around Ukraine continues to dominate security considerations in Europe as it did in 2014, but its impact is far greater. Today, the OSCE faces sharpening institutional divisions, competition and confrontation in a context of mutually exclusive perceptions, yet the current crisis has highlighted the enduring strengths and advantages of the OSCE as the organization best suited to bridge growing divides and facilitate cooperative solutions.

The OSCE response to the current crisis has once again demonstrated its relevance to European security. The Organization has proved itself capable of substantive engagement under Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter. The deployment of two OSCE field missions — the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, and the Observer Mission at the Russian Checkpoints Gukovo and Donetsk — is the most visible example of the OSCE's ability to launch collective actions even during a highly divisive crisis.

The OSCE has been continuously engaged in seeking a diplomatic solution to the current crisis. Serbia is now doing its utmost to pursue those efforts in an impartial and transparent manner. Our highest priority is to protect the inclusive and cooperative nature of the OSCE's work and to prevent the crisis from escalating into a larger confrontation. Serbia recognizes that both the OSCE and European security are at a critical juncture, and is fully committed to working with the main stakeholders to restore peace and stability in Ukraine. We are making every effort to rebuild confidence and trust among participating States and to restart our work together towards the vision of a Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security community.

I would like to personally acknowledge the unstinting efforts of the 2014 Swiss OSCE chairmanship, and of my colleague, Swiss Minister Didier Burkhalter, to facilitate a political process aimed at de-escalating the crisis. I would also like to thank Ambassador Heidi Tagliavini, my Special Representative to Ukraine and to the Trilateral Contact Group, for her tireless commitment to helping the parties find the path towards peace. I also commend the dedicated work of the Special Monitoring Mission.

Since assuming the chairmanship of the organization at the beginning of the year, my agenda has been dominated by the ongoing political crisis and escalating violence in Ukraine. An increasing number of people in eastern Ukraine have been impacted by recurring violence. Waves of civilians have been dislodged from their homes in a desperate search for safer ground, accounting for a combined figure of over 1 million displaced, over 5,000 killed, and more than 12,000 wounded. It is therefore high time for peace to take hold. The package of measures announced in Minsk on 12 February is the best available road map to restore calm to the east of the country. We hope that the political will displayed by the signatories to the package of measures in Minsk will prevail in order to

ensure that the guns are silenced and human suffering is eased.

Ukraine is at a critical juncture; what is needed is full adherence to the ceasefire to allow for the implementation of the other elements of the package, notably the withdrawal of heavy weapons and equipment. The OSCE Special Monitoring Mission is ready and willing to play its role to facilitate, monitor and supervise those crucial activities, in close coordination with the Trilateral Contact Group. While the current focus understandably remains on implementing the military aspects of the second Minsk agreement, we should not lose sight of the non-military elements of the arrangement, such as the sorely needed restoration of socioeconomic ties, local elections and constitutional reform.

Turning to the humanitarian situation, I wish to emphasize the importance of coordination and cooperation between the OSCE and the relevant United Nations agencies. While the Monitoring Mission is not a humanitarian presence, it is well placed — given its large number of monitors in the conflict zone — to assist in the identification of urgent humanitarian needs. I welcome the close cooperation between the OSCE and the United Nations on the ground on humanitarian issues and the protection of human rights.

Concerning border-related issues, I would like to highlight the ongoing importance of the OSCE Observer Mission at the Russian Checkpoints Gukovo and Donetsk. Despite the limited scope of its operations, it remains the only international presence on the international Ukrainian-Russian border. The OSCE Special Monitoring Mission will continue to conduct patrols to locations on the Ukrainian side of the border, but increased border monitoring activities will be dependent upon the security situation on the ground. I sincerely hope that in the weeks and months to come we can further build on the measures recently agreed upon in Minsk, with a view to returning peace to eastern Ukraine. Serbia's chairmanship will continue to do its utmost to help reach that goal.

We must not overlook the detrimental impact of the crisis in and around Ukraine on the broader OSCE agenda, in particular on the protracted conflicts in Moldova and the Southern Caucasus. In particular, as we prepare to commemorate the fortieth anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act this year, we need to find ways to rebuild trust and confidence and to re-engage in joint efforts to strengthen security across the whole OSCE region. We must keep a close eye on the broader strategic perspective of European security, and we must continue to uphold our common values and principles as enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act and other landmark OSCE documents. I strongly believe that the OSCE has a crucial role to play in the overall European security architecture as an inclusive platform for dialogue, building trust and bridging the growing East-West divide. That is captured in the motto of Serbia's chairmanship — "Rebuilding trust and confidence in order to create a positive agenda for the future" — and we shall spare no effort in pursuing that goal.

In this regard, I welcome the creation of the Panel of Eminent Persons on European Security as a Common Project, which was launched in December at the annual OSCE Ministerial Council in Basel. I am confident that the Panel has the potential to generate innovative ideas that can help us recapture the spirit of Helsinki and I look forward to its recommendations on how to replace the current culture of confrontation with one of cooperation and joint action.

Addressing the protracted conflicts is high on Serbia's OSCE agenda. All parties should step up their efforts within the agreed formats to move away from the current status quo and show more political will to make progress towards a peaceful settlement. We believe that small but concrete steps will help improve trust and confidence among the parties and can pave the way to address problems effectively.

I am particularly concerned over recent developments related to Nagorno Karabakh. Last year's three meetings between the Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan were an encouraging indication of a renewed appetite for dialogue. However, since then we have observed a sharp deterioration of the situation on the ground and the political process has slowed. Serbia's OSCE chairmanship continues to support the efforts of the Minsk Group co-chairs to facilitate high-level meetings and to explore, together with the parties, all avenues that may lead to a long overdue settlement. In Munich earlier this month, I met with the co-chairs and my personal representative to discuss further steps to decrease tensions in the region. On that occasion, I discussed the situation also with the Foreign Ministers for Armenia and Azerbaijan. I shall continue my engagement with the leaders in the region when I visit them in a few months.

Serbia's chairmanship continues to support the OSCE's close cooperation with the United Nations

and the European Union in co-chairing the Geneva international discussions. Our co-facilitation with the European Union of a Joint Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism helps us ensure the safety and security of people living close to South Ossetia's Administrative Boundary Line. The OSCE continues to support the swift resumption of the meetings of the Gali Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism. We are keeping the possibility of some form of OSCE presence in Georgia on the agenda to enhance our support for both the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism and the Geneva discussions.

It is unfortunate that the "5+2" process for the settlement of the Transdniestrian conflict has stalled in recent months. I intend to try to re-energize the process. My Special Representative recently visited Chisinau and Tiraspol precisely for that purpose. The establishment of the new Government in Moldova will hopefully also contribute in this regard. Restoring the regular rhythm of official 5+2 meetings during the course of the year is the first step. What is needed now is the political will to move forward and to make tangible progress. This would benefit the populations on both sides of the Dniestr/Nistru River.

Some years ago, the Western Balkans was riddled with conflicts similar in nature. Nowadays, however, cooperation and the solution of problems by peaceful means prevail. We have decided to include in our chairmanship, as a matter of priority, the promotion of cooperation in the Western Balkans, which is telling proof that, irrespective of height and entrenchment, the obstacles on the road to peace can be overcome with political reason and good will.

The OSCE's activities in Ukraine and in areas affected by protracted conflicts underline the fundamental role of regional organizations in maintaining peace and security in their respective regions, as envisioned in Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. Serbia's chairmanship will continue to pursue the efforts initiated under the Swiss chairmanship to further operationalize the role of the OSCE as a Chapter VIII regional arrangement. The OSCE stands ready to make its experience available to the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations. As we speak, the members of the Panel are visiting Vienna. They will meet with relevant OSCE interlocutors, including representatives of the participating States.

The OSCE's anti-terrorism activities provide another example of the substantial contribution that regional organizations acting under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations can make in support of United Nations-led efforts to fight terrorism. Recent events have underscored the need for the international community to remain vigilant and join forces in tackling this deeply troubling phenomenon. I am pleased to highlight the OSCE's close collaboration with virtually all United Nations entities taking part in the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force. The benefits of this kind of collaboration have been plentiful. We are determined to make the most of all opportunities for collaboration in the future.

As we know, the OSCE and the United Nations share common interests in many parts of the OSCE area. Increased cooperation will enable us to maximize synergies globally, regionally and locally. At the same time, we will use existing resources more effectively and leverage capacities on the ground, like the OSCE field operations. At the 2014 Ministerial Council in Basel, OSCE participating States committed themselves to countering the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters, as well as kidnapping and hostage-taking for ransom by terrorist groups. Both ministerial declarations support relevant Security Council resolutions.

Thanks to its comprehensive approach to security, the OSCE not only plays an important role in countering terrorism, but also helps prevent divisions within societies and to foster tolerance and non-discrimination. Our chairmanship will devote special attention to the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters and also to violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism, particularly the radicalization of youth. We will convene an OSCE-wide counter-terrorism expert conference on this issue in Vienna on 30 June and 1 July. The OSCE is well placed to work, through its participating States and field operations, on promoting community-based approaches to countering violent extremism, including through the involvement of youth, women and civil society. We are also in dialogue on this issue with our Mediterranean and Asian Partners for Cooperation.

The partnership between the United Nations and the OSCE is critical for addressing security challenges in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian space. The OSCE engages in political dialogue, coordination and information exchange with the United Nations on thematic and regional issues both at the political and expert level. All OSCE structures work with a wide range of United Nations entities to enhance security in

all three dimensions across the OSCE area and in the adjacent regions. We highly value this close cooperation. We are eager to make it more operational and results-oriented through revamped staff talks, targeted staff exchanges and the pragmatic implementation of the existing institutional framework.

The OSCE is also committed to creating new synergies with the United Nations in key regions of common interest, including Eastern Europe, South-East Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia and Afghanistan, as well as the southern Mediterranean. Both OSCE and United Nations field operations are precious assets, and their potential for cooperation should be exploited to the maximum. The OSCE is eager to intensify its partnership with the United Nations. I hope that we can turn creative ideas for cooperation into successful initiatives.

I thank Council members for their attention and I am ready to answer any questions they may pose.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Dačić for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the members of the Security Council.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are pleased to welcome to the Security Council the First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Serbia, Mr. Ivica Dačić, in his capacity as Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and we thank him for his comprehensive briefing.

The Russian Federation has consistently championed the improvement and development of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional mechanisms on the basis of the Charter of the United Nations, first and foremost, its Chapter VIII. It is on this basis that cooperation between the United Nations and the OSCE should be grounded. Cooperation between the two Organizations is consistent and multilateral in nature. It encompasses all dimensions of security, including cross-dimensional issues. The OSCE should complement the United Nations in dealing with global issues and assist in the implementation in the areas of its regional responsibility within the framework of its mandate of mechanisms that have been agreed at a global level.

Russia stands ready for constructive cooperation with the Serbian chairmanship-in-office of the OSCE. We back the policy course adopted by it aimed at restoring trust and the development of a positive, forward-looking agenda. We are convinced that it is going to lead in an impartial way, mindful of the interests of all participating States, and it can expect our support in this endeavour. In our view, there is a need to focus the work of the Organization this year on continuing — within the framework of the Helsinki+40 process, which we backed from the very outset — the political dialogue aimed at finding a path to extricate European security from its crisis, assist in settling the conflict in Ukraine through participation of the OSCE in the Trilateral Contract Group and support the work of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine. There is also a need to appropriately mark at the OSCE the seventieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War.

On the agenda, we also have the very timely topic of countering terrorism and drug trafficking. In this context, we deem it important to organize an OSCE conference on the threat of foreign terrorist fighters as a way to counter the spread of terrorist and extremist ideology, prevent the radicalization of the social and political mood, and combat drug threats stemming from Afghanistan.

The current situation speaks to the need for organizing an event on protecting Christians. In this vein, two meetings on Islamophobia and anti-Semitism were organized in 2014. It would be useful to hold a seminar on a comparative analysis of the methodologies of the Organization and monitoring of elections at the OSCE, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, including an assessment of the conduct of electoral campaigns and an extension of the comprehensive analysis of electoral legislation at the OSCE that was carried out by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) in 2013, upon the initiative of Russia and Belarus.

The Ukrainian conflict has shown that the OSCE remains needed in the pan-European area. To fully realize its potential, the Organization must move towards a rejection of confrontation and a return of the discussion to a constructive mode. It is only thus that we will be able to resolve the accumulated systemic problems.

The fortieth anniversary of the OSCE this year is a good opportunity to tackle the issue of updating the European security system. There is a need to reaffirm

the fundamental principles of the Helsinki Final Act and the provisions of the Charter for European Security, in order to take steps towards the implementation of the principle of the indivisibility of security and implement States' commitments not to strengthen their security at the expense of the security of others. We expect to see the OSCE return to discussing the issue of forging a single politico-military-humanitarian-economic space stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans, including the issue of incorporating integration processes — the so-called integrating of integration.

Separately, I would like to touch upon the importance of relaunching a substantive discussion on the reform of the OSCE. Russia backed the idea of the creation of a panel of eminent or wise persons at the OSCE on issues of European security and sent one of our leading political experts to participate in it. We expect that the intellectual contribution of the group will serve to lend impetus to a resumption at the OSCE of broad discussion on key issues of security.

On the whole, we welcome the efforts of the OSCE on assisting and settling the conflict in Ukraine. In the Contact Group, with the participation of the Special Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office in Ukraine, Ms. Heidi Tagliavini, we were able to achieve positive results. We are satisfied with the adoption on 12 February of a package of measures on the implementation of the Minsk agreements and of resolution 2022 (2015), which backed it up. Now it is important to achieve the implementation of the package measures by all the parties of the conflict. In the OSCE, work has already started on determining modalities and concrete steps on assisting implementation.

We welcome the active role played by the Special Monitoring Mission, whose priority areas of work we see to be monitoring the ceasefire and the withdrawal of heavy weaponry, assisting in dialogue and investigating violations of humanitarian law and human rights law. We are carefully following the Mission's reports, which should be free of censorship. What is unacceptable are cases of pressure being exerted on the monitors. The security provided for them must be unswerving. The Special Monitoring Mission plays a key role in monitoring compliance with the Minsk agreements of 12 February. The impartial verification activity of the Special Monitoring Mission must be equally spread over the whole region comprising the area of the ceasefire and the withdrawal of heavy weaponry under the 12 February agreement. We expect the Mission to continue to fully inform us in its reports of the situation throughout the entire territory. In that regard, the Mission will play an important role in closely coordinating all responsible individuals and structures from Kyiv, Donetsk and Lugansk.

Nevertheless, there should be no reduction in the attention paid by the Special Monitoring Mission to other regions of Ukraine in addition to the south-east. We back the Special Monitoring Mission with financial and human resources and we are in favour of expanding its capacities. We continue to search for specialists for work in the Special Monitoring Mission based on its growing needs.

On the whole, we are satisfied with the work of the OSCE's monitors at the Russian-Ukrainian border crossing points in Donetsk and Gukovo. They are noting the real situation of refugees, and despite fanciful claims are confirming the absence of the deployment of any Russian military forces. We see no need for proposals to expand their mandate to the whole of the Donetsk-Lugansk section of the Ukrainian-Russian border, since they are not in keeping with the Berlin Declaration of 2 July 2014, which was reached by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of France, Germany and Ukraine, for whose implementation the OSCE monitors were deployed. On this issue, there is a need to reach agreement with the separatists as one of the parties to the conflict.

We note the readiness of the OSCE ODIHR to monitor the elections in the Donbas as soon as all aspects related to their organization and implementation in accordance with the package of measures dated 12 February are settled and agreed. The elections will substantially determine the whole political process of a settlement. There will be a need to take into account the fact that a large number of individuals were forced to leave the conflict zone and now find themselves both in other regions of Ukraine and abroad.

Mr. González de Linares Palou (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I very much appreciate the briefing from the Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, Mr. Ivica Dačić.

Spain recognizes the importance of cooperation between the United Nations and the regional security organizations and believes that, under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, this cooperation is

called upon to contribute in a marked manner to the maintenance of international peace and security. In that context, we think that there is broad manoeuvring room for cooperation between the United Nations and the OSCE in the fostering of collective security in the OSCE region and, in particular, currently, in contributing to a solution to the conflict in Ukraine, facilitating humanitarian assistance for the population.

Spain's commitment to the OSCE goes back to the origin of the organization. We participated in the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and signed the Helsinki Final Act, the fortieth anniversary of which we are commemorating this year. More recently, as members of the Council know, we presided over the Organization in 2007. I assure Mr. Dačić that he can count on the support of Spain in addressing his priorities, many of which are also our priorities within the OSCE over which he presides.

First of all, we support the efforts that the OSCE and its Chairperson-in-Office are undertaking in order to contribute to a resolution of the crisis in Ukraine. Spain is aware of the tremendous amount of work that the Chairperson-in-Office is facing right now as a result of the clear role he is entrusted with in the current security crisis, which, I believe, is the most significant in the OSCE area since the end of the Cold War. Spain is convinced that the Minsk agreement of 12 February, which the Security Council endorsed and which includes an important role for the OSCE — is an opportunity to move ahead on the road towards a peaceful resolution to the conflict with respect for the sovereignty, unity, independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine. I should like to thank France and Germany again for their initiative, which we firmly support.

We also support the worthwhile work of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission, to which Spain will continue to contribute human and financial resources. We believe that the Mission must have the resources it needs at all times. We also very much appreciate the excellent work of Ambassador Heidi Tagliavini, Special Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office to the Trilateral Contact Group. Moreover, we welcome the importance that the Chairperson-in-Office will give to continuing the efforts to resolve prolonged conflicts in the framework of the formats agreed upon in each case. We think that his vision of favouring small steps that build trust between the parties is an essential first phase before addressing the substantive issues.

The fight against terrorism — identified by the Chairperson-in-Office as one of his priorities — is another area in which the OSCE can count on our active cooperation. We are aware of the growing importance of the transnational threats, such as cyber threats and organized crime, with its ramifications in drug trafficking, security and the control of borders. We would say the same regarding the risk regarding of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. In all of those areas the Chairperson-in-Office will have the support and know-how of my country.

When it comes to strategies to combat terrorism, it is essential that we pay particular attention to the causes and the prevention of violent radicalism. Spain, along with Turkey, was a driver behind the Alliance of Civilizations, a crucial tool in promoting dialogue while fighting against intolerance and radicalization. The OSCE is participating actively in the Alliance's Group of Friends. We must extend political support to the Alliance, but also provide it with the means that allow it to work effectively.

Spain also has a long tradition in the area of mediation and the promotion of dialogue. We welcome the association framework on mediation between the OSCE and the United Nations. We wish to make available to the Chairperson-in-Office our experience and recent initiatives in that area, in particular with regard to our mediation initiative in the Mediterranean, which we launched together with Morocco.

On the political-military dimension, Spain believes that measures to boost both confidence and security are an essential element when it comes to military security within the OSCE space. The conflict in Ukraine has clearly underscored that military transparency between and among participating States in the control of weapons is a matter of particular importance in the framework of European security.

I should like to conclude by underscoring that the magnitude of the crisis in Ukraine should not let us forget that many of the threats to security in the OSCE area come from the Mediterranean. Spain is committed to fostering fruitful relations and dialogue with its Mediterranean cooperation partners. This region offers a great deal of opportunities, but also a great deal of challenges.

Mr. Jusys (Lithuania): I wish to welcome Minister Dačić to the Security Council in his capacity as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

(OSCE) Chairperson-in-Office, as well as to thank him for his briefing.

Forty years ago, the Helsinki Final Act spelled out fundamental principles governing relations from Vancouver to Vladivostok: the non-use of force, non-infringement upon each other's sovereignty and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. As we commemorate the seventieth anniversary of the Charter of the United Nations and the fortieth anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act, we must recommit ourselves to the constitutional foundations of the United Nations and the OSCE.

The very foundation of this Organization has been seriously damaged, as the Charter of the United Nations and Helsinki Final Act have been violated by Russia's military aggression against Ukraine and its occupation of Crimea. The ink of resolution 2202 (2015) was still fresh when Russia-backed and -commanded militants shelled Debaltseve, Gorlivka and Pervomaysk. The resolution obliges all parties, including Russia, to implement their commitments under the Minsk agreement.

The OSCE plays key role. It has the mandate to facilitate the implementation of all the Minsk agreements. The challenge is the denial of access. The OSCE Special Monitoring Mission must be allowed to carry out its monitoring and verification functions. The denial of access by pro-Russian militants is a violation of resolution 2202 (2015).

Effective monitoring of the Russian-Ukrainian border will be another crucial step, but Russia has so far denied denied that in order to sustain the war in eastern Ukraine. In that connection, I wonder, whether the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office elaborate upon the possibility of United Nations cooperation with OSCE to ensure full control over and monitoring of the Russia-Ukraine border, of which OSCE currently monitor 80 metres.

The protracted conflicts in Europe have been simmering for too long. The violent trend in Nagorno Karabakh is worrisome. There is a clear need for the highest political involvement in order not to let the situation spiral out of the control. Russia is using all means to hinder Moldova's European integration process. The 5+2 talks have been taken hostage by the separatist region of Transnistria and their political masters by way of conditioning the 5+2 agreements.

The so-called agreements between Russia and the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali are a barely masked annexation and a breach of the principles of international law and Russia's commitments made by President Medvedev in 2008. In that connection, we wonder if the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office intends to react to the latest annexation of Georgian territory — when Russia and Tskhinvali signed the so-called integration agreement?

Fanning protracted conflicts in that corner of the world should also be seen in the context of the dismantlement of the European system of conventional arms control and confidence- and security-building measures. Lithuania calls for full implementation and modernization of existing commitments, in particular the Vienna Document. The OSCE has already made some tangible progress in its efforts to complement international processes towards enhancing transparency in cyber space. It has developed confidence-building measures to reduce the risks of conflict stemming from the use of information and communication technology. The OSCE is also contributing to debates by sharing best practices and lessons learned.

We commend the focus of the Chairperson-in-Office on implementing the Basel Declaration on countering foreign terrorist fighters, and on kidnapping and hostage-taking for ransom. Good coordination among the the United Nations, the OSCE, NATO and the European Union is essential. We support it.

This year marks the fifteenth anniversary of t resolution 1325 (2000), on women's role in peace and security. In order ensure that experiences from the OSCE region are included in the United Nations-commissioned study, in April Lithuania will hold a regional meeting on women and peace and security in Vilnius.

Fundamental freedoms and human rights are under threat in parts of the OSCE area. OSCE institutions, along with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, should take a proactive stance in addressing the human rights abuses in illegally annexed Crimea, as well as in the areas controlled by the armed groups in eastern Ukraine. The United Nations, the OSCE and the Council of Europe have to be granted secure, safe and unrestricted access to the whole territory of Ukraine, including Crimea.

The propaganda waged by State-owned media inciting hatred and aggressive nationalism highlights

the need to promote tolerance and non-discrimination and to place fundamental freedoms, especially the freedom of expression and the freedom of media, very high on the OSCE agenda.

We look forward to continued cooperation between the OSCE and the United Nations in seeking a durable solution to European security.

Mr. Olguín Cigarroa (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this meeting to address the issue of cooperation between the United Nations and regional bodies and arrangements. We also thank Mr. Ivica Dačić, Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), for his briefing.

In commemorating 40 years of the Helsinki Final Act, it is appropriate to reflect on the OSCE's contribution in ensuring international peace and security. For Chile, collective action is essential in tackling both traditional and emerging threats to peace and security, and it should be strengthened through cooperation among regional bodies and arrangements. That is the sense in which my country understands Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations.

Yesterday the Council reflected on history and reaffirmed the commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations (see S/PV.7389). My delegation emphasized the full force of those irrevocable principles in guiding relations among States. Those values and norms also guide the OSCE in its work to resolve situations currently posing a serious threat to regional stability and global security, including protracted conflicts. We underscore that the territorial integrity and sovereignty of States must be respected.

In reflecting on the work of the OSCE, Chile emphasizes the promotion of inclusive development for the rehabilitation of fractured societies — an idea that is also related to conflict prevention and peacebuilding and corresponds to a development model advocating political stability, democratic governance and social cohesion. In that context, we reiterate that mainstreaming of the gender perspective is critical.

The OCSE has contributed to conflict resolution and stability in Europe and is working to build trust and confidence in the framework of a positive agenda for the future. We believe that the organization has assisted its member States in times of difficulty, including situations that affected regional stability, security and global peace. In that context, we underscore the support of the OSCE to democracy, the rule of law and human rights through its mechanisms and operations on the ground, on behalf of issues on the Council's agenda as well as issues that are not.

Minister Dačić's briefing made clear that the main challenge of the organization will be in maintaining the legacy of dialogue and compromise, the peaceful settlement of disputes, the promotion of confidence-building measures and the implementation of the concepts of solidarity, responsibility and cooperation, which have characterized the organization. The OSCE remains an essential forum for dialogue and a stabilizing mechanism — even more so in view of the challenges facing the region today.

In conclusion, Chile shares the principles, values and goals that the OSCE follows and promotes, because we consider it essential that regional mechanisms and bodies strengthen effective universal action by ensuring conditions conducive to durable peace and security and understanding among communities and peoples.

Mrs. Schwalger (New Zealand): We commend Minister Ivica Dačić, in his capacity as Chairperson-in-Office, for his efforts to strengthen the range of activities of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in promoting regional stability and security. We acknowledge that it is a challenging role.

As a regional organization, the OSCE has important functions across the full spectrum of the Security Council's mandate — from early warning to conflict prevention, conflict management and conflict resolution and tackling root causes. We strongly support cooperation between the Security Council and the OSCE, not only in immediate crises but in the full range of peace and security issues dealt with by the OSCE.

In particular, we commend and support strongly the OSCE's engagement in the situation in Ukraine and its efforts towards finding a peaceful solution. We members of the Council must continue to play our role and our part, including by continuing to apply pressure on the parties to adhere to the commitments made in Minsk, most immediately to observe the ceasefire and withdraw heavy weaponry.

By unanimously adopting resolution 2202 (2015), the Security Council sent a strong message that it stands behind the OSCE as it carries out its activities in Ukraine, particularly the monitoring and verification

of the ceasefire. It is unacceptable that the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission has not been guaranteed safe, secure passage to certain areas by the separatists, including Debaltseve. Without safety guarantees, it cannot do its job.

We call for all parties to the conflict to ensure safe and unfettered access by the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission, as provided for under the package of measures for the implementation of the Minks agreements. Those provisions must be respected. We reiterate our call on Russia to use its influence with the separatist groups to comply with what has been agreed.

Furthermore, in the absence of mandated reporting from the ground by the Secretary-General, the Special Monitoring Mission is best placed to provide accurate reporting on the implementation of the ceasefire and is an important source of information to enable the Council to remain properly seized of the situation.

Mr. Delattre (France) (*spoke in French*): I welcome the presence of Mr. Ivica Dačić, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, and thank him for his briefing. I congratulate his country on his accession to the chairmanship-in-office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in 2015.

Exactly one year ago, we addressed the situation in Ukraine for the first time in the Security Council (see S/PV.7117). The crisis that had begun there required the OSCE to play its full role, as it was in a unique position to overcome the concerns of all involved. In the circumstances, the OSCE was able to assume its full responsibility by deploying the Special Monitoring Mission and becoming a party to the Minsk agreements, which were signed by OSCE Special Representative Heidi Tagliavini.

Faced with a security and humanitarian situation that remains alarming, we have a collective responsibility to spare no effort in silencing the weapons and achieving an agreement. That was the objective of the approach chosen by the German Chancellor and the President of the French Republic a few weeks ago. Last week, in adopting resolution 2202 (2015), the Council endorsed the Minsk agreements, putting its full weight and authority behind the commitments undertaken by the parties. The OSCE must continue to play its full role by ensuring the good faith implementation of all of the Minks agreements, which now from part of a Council resolution.

Yesterday the OSCE received the document that was agreed to by both the Ukrainians and the separatists, which disclosed the details with regard to the withdrawal of heavy weapons. The agreement is a first positive step in terms of implementing that element of the Minks agreements. It must be immediately implemented with the full involvement of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, which will have to control, verify and monitor the withdrawal of heavy weapons. Its role cannot be limited to joint patrols along the line of contact, as requested by the ceasefire control commission, according to information transmitted by the parties.

This morning in Paris, at a Normandy format meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Russia, Germany and France, the four Ministers asked that the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission be strengthened and its mandate extended with additional personnel, equipment and financing. It is quite normal that the OSCE should be able in this task to count on United Nations support. After all, the United Nations possesses the necessary expertise and recognized capacities. Channels already exist for both organizations to offer each other mutual support. We stand ready to assist both organizations in exploring ways to improve that cooperation. Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations provides an ideal format for that dialogue, which the Council has successfully used in other circumstances.

Above and beyond Ukraine, cooperation between the OSCE and the United Nations covers a broad field of action and various situations — from Central Asia to Bosnia to Georgia and Kosovo — in which the OSCE and the United Nations have demonstrated their ability to work together harmoniously. That complementarity is primarily based on the multidimensional concept of security held by the OSCE. Through its field missions, the OSCE is present in the Balkans, the Caucasus and Central Asia, and it often works alongside the United Nations in a number of areas.

In the Balkans, the OSCE, in full cooperation with the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, enabled voters in Kosovo to participate peacefully in the elections of June 2014. In addition, we support the priority Serbia has granted to water management, a central issue in an area affected by flooding. The OSCE will tackle that issue during a forum on economic and environmental issues.

In the Caucasus, the OSCE works to promote dialogue and confidence-building. France is especially committed as a co-Chair of the Minsk Group, alongside the United States and the Russian Federation, and stands ready to help Armenia and Azerbaijan to find a peaceful solution to the conflict in Nagorno Karabakh. We take note of the commitment of the Serbian Chairperson-in-Office to contribute to the task by promoting dialogue between the parties.

Concerning Georgia, France has lent its support to the Geneva talks, in which a very important role is played by the OSCE, side by side with the European Union and the United Nations. We reaffirm our support for the territorial integrity of Georgia and reject the reconciliation agreements signed with the separatist regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. We urge the parties not to undermine, by any further actions or words, the dialogue format that has been established. We also welcome the willingness of the Serbian chairmanship-in-office to relaunch a discussion on the OSCE presence on the ground, the institutional organization of which remains to be determined.

Beyond all those issues, we welcome Serbia's determination to fully exploit the capacities of OSCE field missions to ensure that assistance is tailored to the host country's needs and provided in a cost-effective and environmentally friendly manner.

Secondly, reflections on the political-military aspects within the OSCE framework contribute to an overall improvement in security, of which the Council remains the cornerstone. We welcome the commitment of the Serbian chairmanship-in-office following Switzerland's chairmanship, to modernize the 2011 Vienna Document on confidence-building measures and strengthening security. At the same time, we welcome its intention to update the OSCE code of conduct on political-military aspects, which are essential to ensure democratic control of armed and security forces.

We note with satisfaction the desire of the Serbian chairmanship to continue discussions on the issues of reform and governance of security systems, which are also being evaluated at the United Nations. Similarly, we impatiently await the events organized by the Serbian chairmanship on the fight against transnational threats, a topic on which the Council has also been seized.

The future of the OSCE and its dialogue with the United Nations will be marked this year by an important commemoration, the fortieth anniversary of the Helsinki Accords. France fully supports the dialogue initiated at the ministerial meeting in Dublin on the political future of the OSCE within the framework of the Helsinki+40 process. France subscribes to the analysis of the Serbian chairmanship on the need to strengthen efforts in the areas of of the rule of law, the freedom of expression, the freedom of the media and the protection of national minorities, all issues that the participating States of the OSCE have been working on for 40 years.

The OSCE covers a vast area from Vancouver to Vladivostok, an area of shared values, marked by the conviction that Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security are closely linked with the promotion of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. All those values are also at the very heart of the United Nations. I wish to reiterate to Serbia our wishes for success during its tenure and to ensure it of France's support.

Sir Mark Lyall Grant (United Kingdom): I thank Deputy Prime Minister Dačić for his briefing as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Chairperson-in-Office. As he has stated, his chairmanship comes during the worst crisis of European security since the end of the Cold War. I should therefore like to focus my remarks on Ukraine and the OSCE role in that crisis.

Over the past months, the work of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission o Ukraine, led by Ambassador Apakan, has been invaluable in giving some visibility to the challenges to peace and security that persist in eastern Ukraine. I pay tribute to the work of the OSCE and express our full support for the Mission and for Heidi Tagliavini, the Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office for Ukraine. We believe that its role should be greatly strengthened.

Last week, the Council adopted resolution 2202 (2015), which endorses a package of measures for the implementation of the Minsk agreement and underlines the importance of achieving a comprehensive ceasefire in eastern Ukraine. However, in the days since the agreement was signed in Minsk on 12 February, the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission has observed continuous breaches of the ceasefire that threaten to further destabilize eastern Ukraine and undermine the Minsk agreements in their entirety.

Minsk called for a ceasefire to begin on 15 February, and for the withdrawal of heavy weaponry to start on 16 February. Yet within 40 minutes of coming into effect, the ceasefire was shattered by a

Russian-backed separatist offensive on Debaltseve. On 19 February, Ukrainian forces withdrew from the city. Scores of Ukrainian soldiers were left dead or injured. The continued presence of Russian military hardware, including Uragan rocket launchers and T-72 tanks around Debaltseve, shows that Russia's commitment to withdraw foreign military formations, which was a key element of the Minsk agreement, has been disregarded. The OSCE reports that convoys are still crossing the international border and that shelling persists in Donetsk and Luhansk, in clear violation of the ceasefire.

There have been some bright spots. We welcome the exchange of a number of prisoners this weekend between the Ukrainian armed forces and Russian-backed separatists. However, many more remain in detention, including the Ukrainian pilot Nadiya Savchenko. Clearly, that is not yet enough.

We welcome efforts by the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to fulfil its mandate in difficult circumstances. We were gravely concerned by reports of aggressive separatist behaviour towards the Mission on 22 February, when a separatist commander at the Kyivski checkpoint in Donetsk city threatened to kill the monitors. On the same day, an unmanned aerial vehicle of the Mission attempting to monitor compliance with the Minsk package in the area surrounding the Donetsk airport was deliberately and consistently jammed. Obstruction and threats to the Mission are unacceptable. The Council fully supports the work of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission, and we should all unequivocally condemn the acts of separatists attempting to impede their work.

The Council has seen that pattern of behaviour before. We recall how the separatists cynically and systematically undermined the September Minsk agreement. We recall how the line of contact was ignored and redrawn as the separatists seized an additional 550 square kilometres of Ukrainian territory, and we recall how indiscriminate shelling of civilians brought the conflict to Mariupol and Volnovakha. As a signatory to the Minsk agreements, Russia needs to ensure that the separatist forces respect the ceasefire, and it must fulfil its own commitment to fully withdraw the heavy weapons it has supplied them with and its military formations from Ukrainian territory.

Russian influence can also help expedite the full exchange of prisoners and guarantee the humane treatment of any soldiers currently detained. It can also permit the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine to continue its important work in monitoring the ceasefire and other provisions of the Minsk agreements. But so far we have seen few signs of Moscow's willingness to engage constructively. Russia has refused to allow the expansion of the OSCE border observation mission to enable full monitoring of the international border, leaving hundreds of kilometres of border open to the flow of weapons and soldiers. It continues to block the OSCE, including the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and the High Commissioner on National Minorities, from any access to Crimea.

Nearly a year on from the illegal annexation of Crimea, we are faced with a crisis that has expanded far beyond the Black Sea and now threatens the security of the region and the credibility of the Security Council. The pattern is familiar from Russian behaviour in Georgia and Moldova — agreements are reached, ceasefires arranged, territorial gains consolidated. In Ukraine, these agreements are systematically breached within days. The violence resumes, and the push for more territory begins again. Quite apart from the terrible human costs, these actions also have profound consequences for international relations.

It is in no one's interests to return to an era where agreements between leaders become worthless. Organizations like the OSCE and the United Nations were founded on the principles of dialogue and respect for peace and stability. The Serbian chairmanship-in-office has made welcome efforts to bolster respect for OSCE principles despite continuing efforts by some States to undermine them. The Security Council must follow this example and ensure that further breaches of Minsk and further erosion of the principles that the Council shares are met with clear consequences. We will be working with our European Union partners to ensure that sanctions remain in place until Russia demonstrates a clear commitment to those fundamental principles.

Mrs. Alingue (Chad) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank Mr. Ivica Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia and Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) for his briefing and wish him every possible success in his new mission.

The end of the Cold War saw the emergence of a new global order where the maintenance of international peace and security has become more

complex. In a multipolar world, and despite a global vision and capacity, the United Nations increasingly requires cooperation with regional and subregional organizations to achieve the objectives of global peace and stability. To that end, the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter define the framework for cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, and especially with the OSCE, which plays such an essential role in maintaining peace and security in Europe.

In that respect, we congratulate the OSCE for its mediation, assessment and verification efforts undertaken to minimize the impacts of the crisis in Ukraine and throughout the region. That work is carried out in very difficult conditions, such as threats and kidnapping of the personnel of the organization. Faced with the resurgence of the fighting following the adoption, on 17 February, of resolution 2202 (2015), which supports the package of measures aimed at the implementation of the Minsk memorandum and protocol for a peaceful settlement of the conflict in Ukraine, Chad encourages the OSCE to step up its efforts to achieve a ceasefire and a complete cessation of hostilities as well as the implementation of the aforementioned agreements.

Chad is concerned by the very serious situation prevailing in eastern Ukraine, where the civilian population continues to find itself in the crossfire between the various combatants. We urge all parties to show restraint, and we reaffirm that the only solution of the crisis can be a political one with respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

Still on the topic of Ukraine, we commend the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission for its support when it comes to the crash of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH-17, with the experts deployed at the crash site to be able to recover the bodies and investigate the causes of the accident despite the difficulties encountered in the conflict zone.

Beyond Ukraine, we welcome the role placed by the OSCE in terms of national dialogue, peacebuilding, the rule of law and restoring links of trust in the region. The conflicts and crises that occurred in Europe during the 1990s have deeply marked and divided the peoples and communities of the Balkans. Reforging links of trust is a fundamental prerequisite for peace and stability in the region. To that end, we encourage the OSCE to continue its work in northern Kosovo, on the situation between Armenia and Azerbaijan and on the resumption of negotiations within the framework of the 5+2 conflict settlement processes with respect to the Transnistria issue.

In the area of humanitarian assistance, we also congratulate the OSCE for the assistance provided to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Croatia in May 2014 during the terrible flooding, which left hundreds of thousands of individuals without shelter or jobs. Despite the effectiveness of the work carried out by the OSCE, that work often faces complex and varied threats. Chad welcomes the fact that among the priorities of the Serbian chairmanship is the topic of terrorist attacks and threats, which have had a cruel impact on a number of countries in the region. Special attention should be devoted to the issue of foreign terrorist fighters and the resurgence of violent extremism and the radicalization of conflicts.

In Africa, the strategy in the Sahel region for the fight against terrorism is one that is aimed at a comprehensive approach, which includes economic, social and human aspects, especially targeting youth. In that regard, we welcome the desire shown and the efforts made by the OSCE to assist youth in terms of promoting their employment, their participation in political life and their inclusion in decision-making processes in order to counter the recruitment of young people by terrorist networks and organizations.

Attacks against the media remind us and continue to demonstrate the need to preserve and promote the freedom of expression and the protection of journalists, just like the promotion of the principles of gender equality, the rights of minorities, tolerance and non-discrimination. We welcome the taking into account of threats such as transnational organized crime, human trafficking and illegal migration, as well as the issues of combating corruption, water management and the prevention of natural disasters.Since the topics are cross-cutting and recurrent throughout a number of regions in the world, especially in Africa, we encourage the OSCE to expand its cooperation to other regional organizations, especially in sharing its experience with the African Union.

In conclusion, I would like to underscore that all of the achievements and prospects I have mentioned mean that the OSCE is a key ally of the United Nations. The search for peace and stability requires knowledge of the situation on the ground and of the deep-rooted causes of conflicts. The expertise and the legitimacy

of the OSCE, in the year of the fortieth anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act, consolidates the foundation of this collective action in favour of peace and stability throughout the world.

Mr. Laro (Nigeria): I would like to begin by congratulating His Excellency Mr. Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, on his assumption of the position of Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) for 2015. We are indeed grateful for his briefing today on the priorities of the OSCE under his chairmanship. We commend his predecessor, Mr. Didier Burkhalter of Switzerland, who led the OSCE in 2014 with clear priorities for the advancement of the Organization.

The OSCE is a key component of Europe's security architecture. Its importance for building strong and generally cooperative relationships among its member States is evident from the briefing we have just heard. The OSCE is making noteworthy progress as an regional organization and is cooperating closely with the United Nations in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.

Nigeria welcomes the high priority that the Chairperson-in-Office has placed on the agreements reached between the parties in pursuit of a peaceful settlement to the crisis in Ukraine. We believe that the implementation process of the current ceasefire under the Minsk Agreement can be strengthened with the support and expertise of the OSCE. We therefore encourage all parties to cooperate with the OSCE Monitoring Mission in Ukraine. Nigeria would like to see mediation, dialogue and cooperation accorded priority in the search for an enduring solution to the crisis in Ukraine.

Nigeria commends the OSCE for its efforts in assisting Azerbaijan and Armenia to find a peaceful solution to the Nagorno Karabakh and South Ossetia conflicts. We also applaud the Organization's support to European Union-led dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina. We urge the OSCE to intensify efforts within its capacities to assist the United Nations in putting an end to armed conflicts in the region.

Nigeria supports the OSCE's work in preventing terrorism and countering violent extremism and radicalization. The changing nature of terrorism and that fact that it is more diffuse, with groups intend of taking advantage of social, economic and governance vulnerabilities have propelled the Security Council and the United Nations to recognize that countering violent extremism is essential for preventing the spread of terrorism. The OSCE's community-policing approach is vital to this end. We take positive note on the outcome of the two-day workshop sponsored by the OSCE and the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum, held in Vienna in October 2014, which focused on the promotion of a gender-sensitive and human rights-based approach to fighting terrorism. Nigeria strongly supports any strategy that empowers women to contribute to efforts that counter violent extremism and radicalization. We are firmly committed to the protection of human rights and civil liberties while fighting terrorism.

Finally, Nigeria commends the OSCE for its multidimensional approach to security, which underpins its adaptability and has allowed it to make significant contributions to peace, security and progress in Europe.

Mr. Omaish (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to welcome His Excellency Mr. Ivica Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, and I congratulate him on assuming his role as Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) for this year. We are confident that Serbia's effective and strong relations, especially with States concerned by conflicts within the purview of the OSCE, will enable him through his chairmanship to develop communications among the parties and to create condition conducive to resolving those conflicts in a comprehensive and cooperative manner.

The OSCE, which enjoys a unique membership, is able to play a vital and fundamental role, especially concerning conflicts in the context of European and Central Asian States. Through its efforts aimed at resolving conflicts, be they intra-State or regional in nature, the OSCE has since its establishment sought to find solutions and to remedy a number of conflicts which, without the joint efforts of that Organization and other members of the international community, would have intensified and continued much longer.

Based on the purposes and objectives of the OSCE, Jordan supports all forms of cooperation between that organization and the United Nations in keeping with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations and in fulfilment of the Charter objectives, especially those aimed at making today's turbulent world more secure,

stable and peaceful and welcoming of all persons, without discrimination or exclusion.

Jordan also supports the role of the OSCE in maintaining diplomatic channels between parties to conflict as a forum enabling communication among the parties. In this context, we look forward to further progress in efforts to resolve the ongoing conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia through the good offices of the OSCE, given its leading role in dealing with that conflict through the Minsk Group, by finding a peaceful solution for it that respects the unity and sovereignty of the internationally recognized Azerbaijani territories and ends the suffering of the refugees resulting from that conflict. It should be based on the various relevant resolutions issued by the Security Council, the General Assembly and the OSCE.

We also commend of the positive role of the OSCE in the Ukrainian crisis since it began, especially in facilitating communication and dialogue between the stakeholders and its efforts to provide tangible measures on the ground to de-escalate the situation and pave the way to a peaceful and sustainable resolution to that conflict.

Promoting human rights, the rule of law and democracy in post-conflict countries is fundamental in building sustainable piece in those communities. We cannot therefore overlook the role of the OSCE in those fields in addition to numerous efforts and initiatives in dealing with conflicts and ending tensions, especially in the Southern Caucasus and Afghanistan, and as far afield as the Balkans, where we hope that, under the current chairmanship of the OSCE, there will be improved good-neighbourly relations.

As Council members know well, the topic of security, in the broadest sense, is at the top of the priorities and concerns of the OSCE, specifically when carrying out its periodic discussions. Among the most prominent common security threats facing all of us today are those resulting from terrorism and terrorist entities which threaten international peace and security. In this context, Jordan calls for intensified joint cooperation with relevant organizations, including the OSCE, in a unified international effort to combat terrorism through a comprehensive and effective approach to tackle this scourge and save our world from it.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm that Jordan, as an active Member of the United Nations and a Mediterranean partner in the OSCE, will spare no effort in promoting cooperation between these two Organizations and supporting them in all fields, especially human rights, disarmament, the environment and dealing with the consequences of natural disasters.

Mr. Lucas (Angola): We welcome His Excellency Mr. Ivica Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, to this meeting of the Security Council and thank him for his briefing outlining the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) priorities under his chairmanship. We wish Serbia the greatest of success in discharging these responsibilities.

Cooperation with regional arrangements strengthens United Nations efforts to maintain international peace and security, prevent conflicts and restore stability in post-conflict situations. Chapter VI of the Charter of United Nations provides the appropriate framework for promoting greater participation of regional arrangements in matters related to international security international peace under Security Council authority.

Forty years after the conclusion of the Helsinki Final Act, an important agreement for stabilizing peaceful coexistence amid the Cold War, we praise the important role played by the OSCE in strengthening security and cooperation in early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation, proving that the organization continues to play a key role as a reliable partner of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian regions.

Angola also praises the important role played by the OSCE in post-conflict transition processes, including in supporting the promotion of dialogue among Kosovo communities, a wide range of reforms in the Western Balkan countries and the continued efforts of the co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group in assisting Azerbaijan and Armenia in finding a peaceful solution for the Nagorno Karabakh conflict. We also acknowledge the positive role played by the OSCE in Ukraine, in particular the role played by the Special Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE, Ambassador Heidi Tagliavini, and the Special Monitoring Mission with a view to reducing tensions and thus fostering peace, stability and security.

We support the call made by the trilateral contact group to all sides in the conflict in Ukraine to fully respect and ensure the safety and security of the personnel of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission. It

is our expectation that the OSCE will be able to make a positive contribution to the implementation of the package of measures agreed in Minsk on 12 February and that the sustained ceasefire will allow for the further implementation of the package of measures and the establishment of peace in Ukraine.

We welcome the priorities outlined by Serbia for its OSCE chairmanship, and we note the particular importance attached to regional and interregional cooperation and a balanced approach to the three OSCE security dimensions, namely, the political and military, the economic and environmental and the human, with a view to addressing conflicts and the root causes of security-related problems.

Angola attaches great value to the mandate of the OSCE, and we would like to encourage the OSCE to strengthen cooperation with African regional and subregional organizations in the framework of shared responsibility in addressing counter-terrorism, cybersecurity, transnational organized crime, drug trafficking, human trafficking, trafficking in weapons, foreign terrorist fighters, violent extremism and radicalization, in particular youth radicalization.

Mr. Ramírez Carreño (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela thanks you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting. We would also like to thank the Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) for his briefing. We also welcome Mr. Ivica Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia. In his briefing, he reviewed the activities of the organization he chairs and indicated the priorities of his country's chairmanship. My country would also like to congratualte Serbia for having assumed the OSCE chairmanship. We are certain that they will be successful in their leadership with a view to resolving the conflicts in the region. They can count on my country's full support.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela supports the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes in line with international law. Direct negotiation is the most appropriate means for achieving that goal. Likewise, on various occasions, we have underscored that mediation by regional organizations is one of the paths towards a negotiated resolution of conflicts, and we therefore support the efforts of the OSCE. Under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, we can promote effective measures to be taken on the ground through the contribution of regional and subregional organizations and the OSCE, given the three security areas it addresses, which are important tools in responding to international challenges and fostering stability and peace. That work will always be in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, with regular dialogue under a system of coordination and complementary actions in order to avoid any redundancy of effort in the various areas.

We recognize that the OSCE has played an important role in the rapprochement of peoples through dialogue. This is reflected in the fact that, despite the diversity of its 57 members, they have been able to overcome differences by employing an inclusive model. Important consensus has been reached in different situations that have required such consensus.

We welcome the fact that during his chairmanship Serbia will continue to work towards a peaceful resolution of crises, confidence-building measures and measures to strengthen solidarity, accountability and cooperation. Those are essential elements in these times and in situations such as in the dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan, where there are Security Council resolutions that must be implemented within the framework of a process of negotiations between the parties. We also recognize the crucial role of the OSCE in the Ukrainian conflict, in which important diplomatic initiatives have been taken. Regarding the situation in the Ukraine, we would like to reiterate our support for the Minsk agreements signed by the Heads of State of Russia, Ukraine, France and Germany as the only means of reaching a political resolution to the conflict. We stress that the ceasefire must be respected, there must not be an escalation of the conflict and there must be a focus, beyond extraregional interests, on an agreement being reached and on the continuity of the diplomatic efforts for peace. We reject the discourse of war. We think that an opportunity should be given to options for the peaceful resolution of this crisis and a process that will allow for the humanitarian needs of civilians to be addressed, help to be provided to the victims of the crisis and its root causes to be addressed.

We must continue to work to prevent conflict to complement the principles of the OSCE through a multidimensional approach that deals with current challenges in the complex and multifaceted international system. With regard to relations between the OSCE and

the United Nations, our country supports the process launched within the organization to make missions more effective on the ground and bring them in line with the specific needs of each host country, always on the basis of the necessary close cooperation with the United Nations in general and the Security Council more specifically.

In addition, we are sure that the OSCE, under Serbian leadership, will be able to play a relevant role in the cooperation to fight against transnational threats, international terrorism, which we repudiate in all of its forms, organized crime, drug trafficking, trafficking in persons and illegal migration, as well as in promoting tolerance and dialogue among cultures. It will also help to fight effectively against xenophobia and discrimination, thus ensuring respect for the rights of national, religious and linguistic minorities.

Finally, we hope that the channels of communication and coordination with the OSCE can be enhanced to the benefit of international peace and security.

Mr. Pressman (United States of America): I would like to welcome the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Chairperson-in-Office, Minister Dačić, to the Security Council and thank him for his briefing on OSCE activities under Serbia's leadership. The partnership between the OSCE and the United Nations is critically important, and we welcome the opportunity to hear about OSCE priorities.

The OSCE has taken on a very difficult and important set of responsibilities in Ukraine, and we strongly endorse the Chairman-in-Office's continued focus on brokering peace in Ukraine and serving as an impartial observer to the September 2014 agreements and the February 2015 implementation package signed in Minsk.

Of course, OSCE engagement and focus cannot alone turn commitments on the many papers that have been signed in Minsk into tangible realities on the ground, though the OSCE can, uniquely, shed light on those who undermine the path to peace. So it should come as no surprise that in addition to repeated attacks on Ukrainian positions well past the agreed line of contact, repeated failure to withdraw foreign fighters and military equipment, and repeated failure to pull back heavy weaponry, Russian-backed separatists have also repeatedly frustrated the access of OSCE observers to the very places they have pledged to ensure such access. This must end.

It is imperative that OSCE observers be allowed to operate safely and be granted unfettered access to all areas in order to effectively monitor the terms of the ceasefire and the subsequent withdrawal of heavy weaponry, foreign troops and mercenaries, in accordance with the Minsk agreements and resolution 2202 (2014), which we just adopted last week.

Under the terms of the Minsk memorandum, OSCE observers are supposed to be allowed to monitor and verify the ceasefire, and monitor and verify security zones in the border regions of Ukraine and the Russian Federation. Under the terms of the Minsk protocol, OSCE observers are supposed to be allowed to monitor the ceasefire, monitor the withdrawal of heavy weapons, and monitor the withdrawal of all foreign militarized formations, military equipment, militants and mercenaries from the territory of Ukraine. Under the terms of the Minsk implementation package, OSCE observers are supposed to facilitate the withdrawal of heavy weapons, and monitor and verify the ceasefire regime and withdrawal of heavy weapons from day one.

And yet, six months after the signing of the Minsk memorandum and protocol and almost two weeks after the signing of the Minsk implementation package, OSCE observers have yet to receive full access from the separatists to all areas to monitor and verify the ceasefire, the withdrawal of heavy weapons and foreign fighters, or security along the border.

Even today, after laying ruthless and deadly siege to the city of Debaltseve last week, approximately 30 to 40 kilometres beyond lines established by the September Minsk agreements, separatists have yet to allow the OSCE's special monitoring mission unrestricted and unfettered access to that city to observe the situation on the ground. So if we are serious about improving cooperation between regional organizations and the United Nations, let us start with this: let us recognize that the work of the OSCE is critical to making the agreed ceasefire and any effort at de-escalation stick, as agreed by all 57 OSCE participating States, and let us take whatever action is necessary to ensure that all actors uphold their commitment to provide unfettered access to the OSCE in eastern Ukraine and that all parties respect the neutrality of its mission and its monitors.

Protecting their access is important because reports of the OSCE's special monitoring mission to Ukraine have been a key source for timely and impartial information on the situation in the Donbas area and

notably on incidents such as the downing of the MH-17 plane, the appearance of weapons, troops and support flowing from Russia into Ukraine, and the shelling of civilian targets in eastern Ukraine.

We commend the OSCE's efforts thus far and encourage the Chairperson-in-Office's continued dedication to monitoring the ceasefire and ensuring that all commitments made in Minsk are upheld, despite the very difficult conditions in which the mission works. He has the full backing of the United States, and, with the adoption of resolution 2202 (2014), the endorsement of the Security Council to implement the Minsk agreements.

The United States strongly endorses the Chairman-in-Office's focus on bolstering OSCE field missions and independent institutions such as the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the High Commissioner on National Minorities and the Representative on Freedom of the Media. The OSCE's field missions contribute to our collective respect for human rights and the institutionalization of the rule of law.

We also welcome the passage by the OSCE Ministerial Council in December 2014 of two decisions on countering the phenomenon of foreign fighters and countering kidnapping for ransom. We support Mr. Dačić's efforts as Chairperson-in-Office to encourage implementation of those important decisions and to continue the work of OSCE field missions in the Caucasus, Central Asia and the Balkans on counter-terrorism issues, including countering violent extremism.

We welcome more OSCE awareness-raising and capacity-building efforts, which promote a multidimensional approach to countering violent extremism, and we encourage collaboration among stakeholders, particularly in the areas of youth, civil society, gender, community policing and human-rights-compliant approaches to addressing terrorism and violent extremism. We also thank the Chairman-in-Office for planning to host a regional expert-level summit in June to follow up on all of these efforts.

Lastly but importantly, in recent months we have seen what should be considered an alarming display of anti-Semitism in Europe, from the shootings at the Jewish Museum in Brussels, to the horrific anti-Semitic attack on a kosher supermarket in Paris, to the recent wide-scale desecration of a Jewish cemetery. Just as anti-Semitism in Europe is rising, so, too, must our will to combat and defeat it. For any organization that has a role in the maintenance of security and peace must also confront the kind of hate that undermines both, and anti-Semitism, as history has shown time and time again, is certainly that.

As such, it is all the more important that the OSCE has undertaken the important work that it has to address anti-Semitism and intolerance, including its declaration to enhance efforts to combat anti-Semitism, adopted at the Basel Ministerial as a follow-up to the commemoration in November of the tenth anniversary of the OSCE Conference on Anti-Semitism in Berlin.

And yet, despite all that has been unfolding across Europe at this 10-year anniversary meeting of the historic inaugural session, a third fewer countries showed up at the 2014 Conference. Of course, meetings and declarations will never alone quash hate, but they are important to focus our collective efforts, galvanize our collective will and force our collective action. The United States urges the Chairperson-in-Office to continue the OSCE's critical work on this issue, and we encourage OSCE participating States to help uphold the commitments enshrined in the declaration.

The United States, as an active member of the OSCE, remains fully committed to the important work of the organization. A strong OSCE is a good partner for the United Nations and a good partner in our cause of championing fairness, security, justice and peace.

Mrs. Adnin (Malaysia): I join other speakers in welcoming His Excellency Ivica Dačić, Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, to the Council today. I wish to congratulate him on his assumption of the post of Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) for 2015, and we are grateful for his in-depth briefing, especially in outlining the priorities of the OSCE under Serbia's chairmanship.

As the largest regional security organization, consisting of 57 countries of Europe, Central Asia and North America, the OSCE plays a crucial role in contributing to peace, security and stability in Europe, as envisaged by Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter. Malaysia welcomes the reaffirmation by the Chairperson-in-Office of the OSCE to continue close

cooperation with the United Nations in upholding the purposes and principles of the Charter.

As mentioned by Mr. Dačić, this year marks the fortieth anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act, which laid down principles to guide relations among participating States. Those principles, which include sovereign equality, refraining from the threat or use of force, the inviolability of frontiers, the peaceful settlement of disputes, non-intervention in internal matters and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, remain as relevant today as they were 40 years ago. In upholding the aforementioned principles, which provide the basic tenets for the work of the OSCE, we welcome the efforts made by the Serbian chairmanship to focus on dialogue and compromise, the peaceful resolution of disputes, confidence-building, solidarity, responsibility and cooperation. We also believe that the motto of the Serbian chairship — "Rebuilding trust and confidence in order to create a positive agenda for the future" — is very timely, in view of the divisions and numerous challenges facing the region today.

Three weeks ago, the Munich Security Conference honoured the OSCE with an award for its outstanding contribution to peace, stability and security in Europe, and particularly for its efforts regarding the Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, as well as its diplomatic attempts to end the crisis there. We congratulate it on a well-deserved award, especially in view of the dangerous situation on the ground in eastern Ukraine. Malaysia would also like to take this opportunity to express its sincere gratitude to the OSCE for facilitating the recovery and investigation efforts related to the downing of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH-17 in eastern Ukraine. Last year, with OSCE assistance, the Dutch-led recovery and investigation teams managed to get access to the site, despite the ongoing fighting, in order to recover the wreckage and the remains and belongings of the victims.

We reiterate our commitment to a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Ukraine, based on the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. We fully support the role of the OSCE in Ukraine, now even more visible with the signing on 12 February of a package of measures for implementing the Minsk agreements that tasks the OSCE with monitoring and verifying compliance with the agreements. We are very concerned about the fact that the OSCE has been denied entry into some conflict areas in eastern Ukraine. We strongly urge all relevant parties to abide by the obligations laid down in the Minsk agreements and endorsed by the Council, and to cooperate fully with the OSCE in order to enable it to carry out its mandate.

We take note of the fact that the Western Balkans is a key priority for the Serbian chairmanship of the OSCE. We fully support the OSCE's continued presence in the Western Balkans, including its missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, in support of the post-conflict transition processes. By building institutions and promoting reconciliation, the OSCE has been vital to enabling the countries of the Western Balkans to make progress with their political, judicial, electoral, economic and social reforms.

Concerning various protracted conflicts, including those in Central Asia, the Southern Caucasus and Moldova, we hope that the Serbian chairship's focus on dialogue and mediation will provide a new impetus for resolving the conflicts that is consistent with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and various United Nations resolutions, as well as the Helsinki Final Act.

We fully agree on the urgent need to combat terrorism, extremism and radicalization as one of the OSCE's key priorities. We also welcome the statement made by Mr. Dačić at the special meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council in Vienna on 15 January, in which he said that our societies should remain united in the face of attempts to create divisions on the basis of religion. At the same meeting, he also called on Governments to take the necessary measures not only to counter terrorism and provide their citizens with security, but also to foster tolerance and non-discrimination in their societies.

Malaysia hopes that the Serbian chairmanship of the OSCE will further intensify its efforts to combat all forms of racism, xenophobia and discrimination, including Islamophobia. Malaysia has long called for the voices of moderation to unite and prevail against those espousing hatred, violence and extremism. We reaffirm our strong and unequivocal condemnation of all violent acts, methods and practices of individuals or groups against innocent civilians, with the intent to create fear and terror for religious, political or ideological reasons. We strongly believe that terrorism must be addressed in a comprehensive manner and not necessarily through the use of force alone. Countering it effectively requires a multifaceted approach that addresses the underlying factors that breed terrorism and extremism. In that

regard, we stand ready to support the work of the OSCE in combating terrorism and extremism.

In conclusion, we wish Serbia success with its chairship for 2015. As an outsider, since Malaysia is not a member of the OSCE, we have observed that the organization has played a rather quiet, behind-the-scenes role in resolving conflicts and contributing to peace, stability and security in Europe. However, that approach has proved effective time and again, since it builds trust and confidence, whether by engaging with stakeholders, mediating between conflicting parties or building institutions in post-conflict societies. We greatly appreciate the OSCE's valuable contribution to the maintenance of peace and security and its close and complementary relations with the United Nations. We would like to assure the OSCE of our continued commitment to supporting its efforts under its Serbian chairship for 2015.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of China.

I would like to thank Mr. Dačić, Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, for attending today's meeting. I listened carefully to his statement.

In recent years, the OSCE has taken active measures in conducting preventive diplomacy, enhancing security and mutual trust, mediating regional disputes and fighting terrorism. China would like to express its appreciation for that, and we encourage the OSCE to continue its efforts to settle disputes peacefully through good offices and mediation, in order to play a constructive role in the maintenance of peace, stability and security. The Security Council and regional organizations each enjoy unique advantages and strength when it comes to maintaining international peace and security. China supports the quest of the United Nations and the Council, on the basis of the Charter of the United Nations, to continue to deepen their cooperation with regional and subregional organizations in a way that complements one another's efforts, enabling them to work together to uphold the purposes and principles of the Charter and the basic norms of international relations.

With regard to the issue of Ukraine, the Security Council recently adopted resolution 2202 (2015) unanimously, in a show of firm support on the part of the international community for the diplomatic efforts of the leaders of Russia, France, Germany and Ukraine, and for a political solution to the issue. In order to address that question, it is imperative that we adhere to the overarching premise of a political settlement, which is necessary if the legitimate rights and aspirations of the various ethnicities in various parts of Ukraine are to be fully accommodated. Attention could also be paid to resolving the reasonable concerns of the parties involved, so as to achieve a balance of interests. What is needed is a comprehensive, balanced and durable political settlement, whose achievement is in the fundamental interests of the parties concerned. China calls on them to act according to the provisions of resolution 2202 (2015), to fully implement the consensus arrived at among the four leaders, and to work to swiftly ease the situation in eastern Ukraine, in order to achieve that country's peace, stability and development.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

The representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I would like to make two brief comments.

First, some members of the Council have abused today's meeting, which is supposed to be devoted to the activities of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Particularly unfortunate was the statement made by the representative of the United Kingdom, which was devoted entirely to Ukraine. Our British colleague once again painted a very one-sided and distorted picture of what is happening. It is apparent that the United Kingdom does not have a complete understanding of the OSCE's role, and that is clearly a result of the fact that Britain is rapidly losing its international position, including on the European continent. The representative of the United States made a statement in a similar key, and that country's role throughout the Ukrainian crisis has been exclusively destructive. All we can do now is hope that the United States will not try to put a wrench in the works of the Normandy process.

Secondly, these days such comments are often used to achieve a desired political and psychological effect. The conflict in Ukraine is the most complex crisis Europe has seen since the end of the Cold War. It is clear that the crisis needs to be assessed in a calculated way. Let us recall that, even after the end of the Cold

War, war broke out in the territory of the former Yugoslav Republic and NATO bombed Serbia. In many cases, the causes for such crises are the very forces that provoked the crisis in Ukraine. Unfortunately, the geopolitical ambitions of a number of forces precluded the flowering of a harmonious political order on the European continent following the end of the Cold War. We need to draw lessons from that. The OSCE's mission is to play a very important role in the process of such rethinking.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The representative of the United Kingdom has asked to speak for a second time.

Mr. Meek (United Kingdom): In response to the point made by our Russian colleague, the focus on Ukraine reflected the serious nature of the situation on the ground there, precipitated by Russia's actions and support for the separatists involved in the conflict. Our calls throughout have been clear. We have called on all sides to observe the ceasefire and implement in full the arrangement set out in the Minsk agreements of September last year and 12 February just past. Where we see flagrant and one-sided breaches of those arrangments, we are duty-bound to draw them to the attention of our colleagues on the Council at briefings such as these.

As my Permanent Representative said, only 40 minutes after the ceasefire came into effect separatists backed by Russia launched a final, all-out assault to secure the town of Debaltseve, something they had clearly been aiming for in the days just before the ceasefire came into effect.

The provisions that will facilitate a resolution of the conflict in eastern Ukraine are clearly laid out in the Minsk agreements. We call again on all parties, including Russia, to play their part in implementing those agreements fully, verifiably and transparently, and in supporting efforts to de-escalate tensions and bring the violence to an end.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I give the floor to Mr. Dačić to respond to the comments and questions raised.

Mr. Dačić (*spoke in Serbian; interpretation provided by the delegation*): I would like to thank all Security Council member States for the support they have expressed to our chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

I would also like to reiterate our wish to cooperate as closely as possible with the United Nations, and therefore value this very beneficial and important meeting. I express my full willingness and readiness, along with those of our Secretary General, Mr. Zannier, and my Special Representatives in various areas, in particular my Special Representative in Ukraine, to participate in the work of the United Nations and to brief the Council on the situation on the ground. The OSCE is the only organization present in Ukraine. That is why the support of the United Nations is of crucial importance to OSCE activities and why I welcome the holding of this meeting.

Without mentioning all of the areas of OSCE engagement, I would like to draw the Council's attention to several topics on our agenda, including the campaigns against anti-Semitism and human trafficking, and water management. I will not mention the various frozen or protracted conflicts except to say that we will use existing means to resolve such situations as those in Nagorno Karabakh, Moldova and Georgia.

I would also like to reiterate that I, as Chairperson-in-Office, together with my team, intend to visit all areas that have an OSCE presence. I have already visited the OSCE missions in the the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and, strange as it may seem, Serbia as well. Against that backdrop, I wish to familiarize myself with all existing issues. I intend to visit the OSCE missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, Kosovo, Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, of course Ukraine, and the five central Asian countries of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.

I recall that Switzerland assumed the chairmanship of the OSCE in 2014; before Switzerland, Ukraine held the chairmanship. The 2013 Ministerial Council was held in Kyiv only two or three months before the eruption of the crisis in Ukraine, and there was no notion or early warning that the crisis would happen. That is a demonstration of how complex the situation is and how difficult it is to plan any activity in an organization such as the OSCE.

We have adopted an budget enabling us to carry out all our activities on the ground. I am grateful for the work of the OSCE troika — Germany, Switzerland and ourselves — and the Normandy group, which includes Russia, Ukraine, Germany and France. The Normandy format meeting took place this morning in Paris, and any participation, whether via video-teleconference,

conference call or personal presence involving either Ms. Tagliavini or Mr. Apakan, is crucial to enabling us to implement the Minsk agreements. I welcome these agreements and hope that some progress will be made on the ground.

I discussed the topic yesterday with my counterparts from Russia and Ukraine, Mr. Lavrov and Mr. Klimkin. The mandate of the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine will come to an end in late March. We have already started to reflect on a new mission, and two ministers have agreed that the current Mission could be extended. The mandate is currently 6 months; we propose that it be extended to 12 months. We also discussed whether there are a sufficient number of observers, and touched on the topic of equipment, of which there was some mention in accordance with the agreement, but which we do not possess. Those include satellite images, drones and armed vehicles. We also broached topics such as the budget, and touched on the issue mentioned by the Lithuanian representative, namely, the mandate of the mission. It remains to be seen whether the scope of the mandate will be changed or remain the same. We will do that in accordance with the agreements under the Normandy format.

I would just like to remind the Council of the scope of responsibility of the Special Monitoring Mission. It is not only to verify the ceasefire, the withdrawal of heavy weapons or the exchange of hostages and prisoners; it will also have to address the law on amnesty and pardons, the reconstruction of social and economic ties, and issues related to gas and electricity, pensions, salaries and trafficking, as well as political issues that were preconditions to achieving full normalization. The agreement envisaged that the Ukrainian authorities would take control of the border the first day after local elections were held in Donetsk and Luhansk, based on agreements that remain to be concluded through mediation under the auspices of the Trilateral Contact Group. The completion of the dialogue, the agreements reached therein, the drafting of the constitution and the role of the OSCE are all highly significant on the ground. That is why various task forces must be established to take charge of the different issues.

I believe that the mission requires full support. There are two missions on the ground. The first is the Special Monitoring Mission, headed by Mr. Apakan; the second is the Observer Mission at the Russian Checkpoints Gukovo and Donetsk, headed by the French diplomat, Mr. Picard. The Swiss Ambassador, Ms. Heidi Tagliavini, is my Personal Representative to the Trilateral Contact Group. It is very important for us to enjoy the support of the United Nations and the Security Council to provide the authority to those missions and thereby enable them to conduct their work in an impartial and fair manner.

We have not made significant progress regarding the ceasefire and the withdrawal of heavy weapons, but our missions need to verify that. We have been told that the parties have started to implement the ceasefire in Donetsk and Luhansk and to withdraw weapons. That is why I called on the parties to provide access to our monitors so they can verify the actions on the ground to determine the truth of the matter. I raise this issue only to illustrate the difficulty of carrying out a mission that is neither military nor combat in nature, but civilian.

At the same time, not all members of the Security Council or other United Nations States Members are aware of the enormous size of the territory of Ukraine. It is the second largest country in Europe. The contact line is 480 kilometers long. The part of the border between Ukraine and Russia that is not under the control of the Ukrainian forces is more than 400 kilometers long. Our mission of 350 personnel needs to be functional and able to conduct its activities. If the political will exists to sign the agreement and adopt the implementation plan, we will make every effort to fully implement the agreement.

I would like to again thank the Council for its assistance in that regard. The OSCE considers the support of the United Nations on the ground to be of the highest importance to ensuring its ability to perform its functions and to de-escalate the crisis in Ukraine, although I do not wish to downplay other ongoing problems. I, my Secretary General and my Special Representatives are ready to respond to the Council's call to participate in debates such as this or on any of topic of great importance to our organization.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.7392

Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7392nd meeting

Tuesday, 24 February 2015, 3 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Shen Bo	(China)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Chad	Mr. Gombo
	Chile	Mr. Olguín Cigarroa
	France	Mr. Lamek
	Jordan	Mr. Hmoud
	Lithuania	Ms. Murmokaitė
	Malaysia	Mrs. Adnin
	New Zealand	Mr. Taula
	Nigeria	Mr. Laro
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Ms. Power
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Suárez Moreno

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on South Sudan (S/2015/118)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on South Sudan (S/2015/118)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of South Sudan to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Hervé Ladsous, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, and Mr. Ivan Šimonović, Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/118, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on South Sudan.

I now give the floor to Mr. Ladsous.

Mr. Ladsous (*spoke in French*): I thank you, Sir, for this opportunity to introduce the latest report of the Secretary-General on South Sudan, issued on 17 February (S/2015/118). As always, I shall take this opportunity to inform the Council on operational developments since then.

As Council members know, the security situation in South Sudan is very worrisome. Many violations of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement, signed more than a year ago on 23 January 2014, have been reported and confirmed, as have numerous clashes between Government and opposition forces, in particular in Unity and Upper Nile states. On 10 February in Unity state, many bombings were reported in the region of Madrassa, south-west of Bentiu. The Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) reported having opened fire after observing the SPLA in Oppostion advance on the city of Bentiu. Our force could not confirm this development on the lines of defence around Bentiu. On 13 February, the SPLA also captured at least five members of the opposition army following clashes between Bentiu and Guit, and those five remain in detention.

Similarly, in Upper Nile state, the security situation has recently been dominated by sustained exchanges of fire between the SPLA and the armed opposition from 8 to 17 February in the Nasir region beyond the Sobat River. There have also been reports of new clashes in the counties of Maban, Melut and Manyo over the past 10 days. The clashes in these states clearly indicate that the oil fields located there remain prime targets for the forces of the military opposition.

At the same time, both sides continue to mobilize and deploy new recruits in preparation for further clashes, while the ongoing dry season opens up new lines of communication and movements of troops and equipment. On 15 February, the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) was informed that armed men, probably belonging to a Shilluk militia allied to the Government, had forcibly recruited at least 89 children from camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Malakal county, Upper Nile state. Eyewitnesses reported to UNICEF that gunmen had surrounded the entire area and searched every house for boys older than 12 years.

Meanwhile, in Pibor county, Jonglei state, the slow integration of Murle forces and the lack of financial resources pledged to the Greater Pibor Administrative Area have the potential to destabilize the agreement of 28 March between the Cobra faction of the South Sudan Defence Army, led by David Yau Yau, and the Government. General Joshua Konyi was appointed Commander of the SPLA in the region, which has also raised tensions because Konyi, a former commissioner of Pibor county, had worked closely with the Sudan People's Liberation Army against the forces of David Yau Yau in the region. We have also received reports that the Murle community had reached an agreement with the Lou-Nuer — which in itself would be an unusual development — to prevent SPLA troops to move through their territory if they were planning to undertake operations to regions under the control of the armed opposition. Currently, there is a great danger that the conflict could spread in the coming months to Pibor and Akobo counties, in Jonglei state.

Tension also mounted in the region of Equatoria, due to the massive influx from Jonglei and Lakes states of heavily armed Dinka nomads, with more than 250,000 head of cattle, onto their neighbors' arable land. These movements reflect long-standing confrontations over

grazing areas south of Lakes and Jonglei states. It is clear that this hotspots could easily turn into war zones.

Furthermore, internal political disputes within the coalition Government in the states of Northern and Western Bahr el-Ghazal have resulted in the somewhat questionable disqualification of the Acting Governor and the President of the local legislature. These tensions could also lead to new intercommunal conflict, even though those two states had until recently remained relatively peaceful despite developments elsewhere in the country.

(*spoke in English*)

The volatile security environment is directly illustrates the continued lack of political will of the parties. The Government and opposition do not seem to take the political negotiations seriously and appear unwilling to make the necessary compromises. The situation at the peace talks in Addis Ababa cannot be described in any other way but as a serious failure on the part of a leadership that remains focused on its pursuit for power rather than on care of its people. The talks are stalled over the three issues of power-sharing, security arrangements and constitutional reforms. The likelihood of either side softening its stance remains low.

Council members will have noted that, on 21 January in Arusha, the parties signed an agreement to unify the Sudan People's Liberation Movement, following talks facilitated by Chama Cha Mapinduzi, which is apparently the ruling party in Tanzania. On 16 February, the parties signed another document, including a road map matrix with specific timelines, to implement the Arusha Agreement. But, in view of the prevailing environment and uncompromising positions expressed by President Kiir and Mr. Machar, the actual implementation of the matrix is very much in doubt.

Last week, on 13 February, the Government announced that it would postpone the general and presidential elections by two years and propose to the National Legislature a constitutional amendment that would extend the terms of the Office of the President and of the National Legislature until 9 July 2017. On 19 February, the Government presented the proposed bill for the amendment of the 2011 Transitional Constitution to members of both houses, who had been recalled from recess for a special sitting. Members of both houses now have one month to look at the proposal, following which the bill would require passage by a two-third majority in both houses, sitting separately. Given the majority enjoyed by the Government in the Legislature, this proposal is likely to be adopted. This step is a response to what was perceived as a strategy of the opposition to call into question the legitimacy of the Government and the President after June this year, and to do so officially so that it would not have to negotiate under pressure. Of course, one can only be concerned that this two-year timeline may become yet another incentive to defer the reaching of compromises necessary for a peace agreement.

Lastly, I have to underline the shrinking of political space and freedoms. That is worrying. Journalists have been detained and harassed for criticizing the Government. The *Nation Mirror* newspaper was closed down on 3 February, after publishing an article claiming that Government forces had abandoned a key town near the international border with the Sudan. On 16 February, even the United Nations Radio Miraya was threatened with shutdown if it continued to interview opposition leaders. Since then, Special Representative Ellen Løj has addressed that situation in a meeting with the Minister of Information of South Sudan, but we remain very concerned about the general trend of shrinking press freedom in the country. Meanwhile, opposition political parties also continue to be prevented from participating in the Addis Ababa peace talks.

The humanitarian situation in South Sudan is at high risk of deteriorating further over the coming months. We currently host 113,000 IDPs in eight sites, and there are an additional 1.5 million displaced across the country as well as close to 500,000 outside it. As fighting continues, displacement is increasing. Over the past two months alone, about 100,000 additional people were displaced despite the fact that it has been a period of relative calm. The number of food-insecure civilians is expected to rise further as we approach the lean season. About 2.5 million people are already in emergency and crisis levels of food insecurity — almost twice as many as in December 2013, when the crisis started — and an additional 3.9 million people are in a state of stress when it comes to food security. In line with seasonal patterns, a drastic deterioration could occur between April and July this year, when the lean season reaches its peak. Needless to say, conflict-affected states are most at risk because markets have been destroyed and foods stocks have been and are being depleted prematurely. Every effort is being made to bring assistance to those in need. Insecurity and

harassment, especially for national humanitarian staff, are hampering response efforts.

As I stated in my last briefing, UNMISS continues to take every opportunity to move from protection by location to protection by presence. The emphasis is increasingly on conducting dynamic, integrated patrols to enhance the protection and reassurance of local communities and to gather vital information to facilitate appropriate and timely responses to new threats. Last month alone, UNMISS conducted over 5,000 patrols through South Sudan of various natures: short-duration, long duration, dismounted, integrated and dynamic air patrols. The vast majority of these missions have been focused on positive and proactive engagement with vulnerable communities outside our bases.

We have established temporary operating bases in key population centres as part of this strategy. For the time being, we are looking at options for establishing forward-operating bases in Bentiu, Malakal and Bor, and seeking the approval of local authorities to that end. We have prepared contingency plans in the event of a worsening security situation. Those plans rely on maintaining quick-reaction forces at a high level of readiness so they can respond swiftly and robustly. All battalions are expected to be able to exercise flexibility so as to act as reinforcements anywhere in the country.

We now have roughly 3,500 of the 5,500 newly authorized troops deployed, and full deployment of the infantry and their enablers will be completed by April, enabling the Mission to further expand its presence in the country. Six of nine utility helicopters have been deployed, and we are pursuing the deployment of tactical helicopter units from Ethiopia and Rwanda. Deployment of a Chinese battalion and additional troops from Kenya is currently under way, and the balance of the troops from Ghana and a riverine unit from Bangladesh will also be deployed in the near future, hopefully by April.

I would have to add that we have continued to experience violations of the status-of-forces agreement (SOFA) such as restrictions of movement, impounding of assets, threats to our personnel and premises, assaults, harassment, arrests, detentions and restrictions on imports of equipment, including, for a while, equipment for the Chinese and Ethiopian contingents. Those seem to be clearing, but we still have to see what will happen on the ground. Yesterday, I circulated a fact sheet on SOFA violations to give the Council a breakdown of all such events that occurred in January.

So we have a very fragile security environment and an ongoing round of peace talks that is not very likely to achieve more progress. I think that now more than ever there is an urgent need to reinforce the mediation efforts and to impose consequences on the parties if they fail to show willingness to compromise and continue to engage in a conflict that will result in the further loss of innocent lives. Even more important in that regard is the need for accountability for war crimes and crimes against humanity, which cannot go unpunished. Accountability is indispensable to long-term peace and reconciliation. The culture of impunity must end, and those responsible for keeping it going must therefore be brought to justice. Since the peace talks have just resumed, I would urge the Council to perhaps look at the possibility of issuing a strong presidential statement that would call on the parties to immediately cease all military operations and make the compromises necessary to reach a comprehensive peace agreement during this round of talks or else face the consequences.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Ladsous for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Šimonović.

Mr. Šimonović: Thank you for this opportunity to address the Council, Mr. President. A couple of weeks ago, I returned to South Sudan after a year's absence, visiting Government-controlled areas and those held by the opposition. Though the scale and severity of the conflict has recently declined, the number of displaced persons and refugees has continued to grow, reaching 2 million, with thousands more civilians dead. Further violations of humanitarian law and human rights have been committed by both sides, as described in public human-rights reports issued by the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) in December and January. There are more people, now more than 110,000 and mainly women and children, seeking our protection in our protection-of-civilian sites. Displaced people told me they were frightened. They had nowhere to go, and both sides seem to be re-arming and preparing for a new military campaign.

In Juba, I met people whose entire families had been executed, based primarily on their ethnicity, as well as women and girls taken as sex slaves after their husbands had been killed. In Malakal, there

was a woman whose disabled husband, a doctor, was shot dead in a teaching hospital last April, along with hundreds of others. In Bentiu, I visited a hospital where in April a group of civilians seeking safety were herded into a small room and shot dead. Returning from the hospital, I encountered child soldiers and saw drunken soldiers at a checkpoint shouting and mocking a group of female civilians. Women sneak out of the United Nations protection site during the day to collect firewood and go to the market, and then return to the camp in the evening. Some of them, they told me, are being harassed and raped.

Besides the conflict between the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and the SPLA in Opposition, there are many local conflicts across the country between tribes and even within clans of the same tribe. They involve looting and cattle raiding, but also killings and sexual violence. There is widespread possession of illegal arms, including AK-47s, which only adds to the insecurity. Many Government officials told me that the people of South Sudan fought for decades for their dignity, independence and human rights. What I saw on my mission was certainly not what they were fighting for. After decades of killing and other violations, there is a need for cultural change based on respect for human life and human rights. While it may take two leaders to end a war in South Sudan, it takes many for peace to become sustainable. The ongoing peace process and future political arrangements must include representatives of all ethnic groups, women, elders, religious leaders, young people and other civil-society actors.

The conflict has not only affected civilians' civil and political rights; it has also had severe social and economic effects. Millions of dollars that could have been directed towards social development have been wasted, first on corruption and then on fighting over the spoils between two groups of army veterans and their leaders. Owing to the fact that economic trade has been suspended, millions have also been lost by neighbouring States, and the international community has been investing in emergency relief instead of capacity-building and development. Prior to the conflict, South Sudan, a country rich in oil, had an annual per-capita gross domestic product of $1,045. In spite of that, its levels of illiteracy and child and maternal mortality are among the highest in the world.

Some positive developments provide hope that the future may be better. Talking to people, I noticed an increasing desire for peace, justice, human rights, social development and political participation. Representatives of all 65 tribes met last week in Juba expressing similar demands. They encouraged the United Nations, the African Union (AU), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the troika of the European Commission, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund to impose sanctions not on the country as a whole but on parties or individuals who refuse to sign agreements or respect peace. The Government has also undertaken important human-rights commitments, and I welcome the ratification of a series of international human-rights instruments. President Kiir has assured me that the ratification instruments will be deposited with the Secretary-General in the next few days.

Let me now turn to the issue of accountability. There is broad acknowledgement, in and out of South Sudan, of the need to break the cycle of impunity with some concrete accountability measures. As a local civil-society activist told me, peace has always died when we ignored justice. The African Union (AU) has undertaken an important initiative with its establishment of a commission of inquiry into the human-rights violations committed in South Sudan following the outbreak of violence in December 2013. Its report has been submitted to the AU Peace and Security Council, but its consideration has been deferred, as that Council put it, until the imminent conclusion of the peace agreement. In his recent report to the Security Council (S/2015/118), the Secretary-General requested the African Union to urgently consider the report and its recommendations.

I discussed the issues of command responsibility, accountability and combating impunity with President Kiir in Juba and with Mr. Machar in Addis. President Kiir assured me that the results of the national investigations into human rights violations following the outbreak of violence, presented to him in December 2014, will be publicly released soon — however, only after a peace agreement is in place.

I welcome the accountability references in the recently signed Arusha and Addis agreements that outline the creation of a hybrid criminal court and the establishment of transitional justice processes, including truth and reconciliation measures and a reparations commission. Indeed, meaningful accountability for serious human rights violations committed during the conflict is the only way to prevent their reoccurrence.

But to be able to deliver in this respect, there is a need to improve the security and justice systems. The formal justice system, already very weak, has completely broken down in the conflict-affected areas. I heard from the Chief Justice that in the whole of the country, there are fewer than 200 judges. In Eastern Equatoria State, which is larger than many European countries, there are only two prosecutors. The National Chief of Police told me that 70 per cent of his police officers are illiterate, so he can rely on just 3,000 out of 10,000 of them to carry out law-and-order functions.

When I was visiting prisoners on death row in Juba Central Prison, one of them complained to me that he should be immediately released because he paid the "blood money." The prison director had promised to release him if this could be confirmed.

It is of the utmost importance that the Council remain seized of the question of accountability for past and present violations of international human rights and humanitarian law in South Sudan. It is important to continue to encourage the Government to release the findings of its own investigations and to encourage the African Union to release the report of the Commission of Inquiry. Together, these reports may form the basis of an accountability process that can contribute to ending the cycle of violence and impunity and pave the way to reconciliation and sustainable peace.

In the meantime, for peace to be reached, a conducive atmosphere is essential. To contribute to that, the Council may wish to encourage human-rights-centred confidence-building measures between the parties. These could include cooperation in tracing missing persons; help in family reunification; and access to and the release of all conflict-related detainees by both sides under the principle of "all for all".

Also, a free and inclusive dialogue is crucial for reaching sustainable peace and building a democratic society. Current restrictions on the freedom of expression against civil society and local media are in this respect quite disturbing. As Under-Secretary-General Ladsous mentioned, journalists have been detained and threatened, and newspapers have been confiscated and closed. Most recently, threats to close it down have even been made against the United Nations own radio station in the country, Radio Miraya.

No effort should be spared for the peace to be reached sooner rather than later. Those in the camps are the 110,000 fortunate ones whom we feed and protect; the remaining almost 2 million are far worse off. There is, for example, a group of 260 displaced persons residing in an abandoned building in Malakal, hoping to find a place in our overcrowded protection-of-civilians site. After brutal attacks on them, and unable to reach our protection site there, those displaced persons, which included elderly people, persons with disabilities, pregnant women and children, walked 100 kilometres from Jonglei state. They are predominantly women, because a number of men have been killed. As their chief, who had been detained and tortured, himself told me, "Most of them have lost their husbands, have been raped, or both. But they hope for a better future for their children".

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Šimonović for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of South Sudan.

Mr. Deng (South Sudan): Let me begin by congratulating you on your assumption of the presidency for the month of February. Although it is rather late in the month, I would like to assure you of the full cooperation of our delegation.

Let me also thank you, Mr. President, and members of the Security Council for giving me the opportunity to address the Council on this issue of vital importance to my country. I must confess that I do so with mixed feelings.

On the one hand, we are deeply appreciative of the crucial contribution that the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) is making in our country in critically important areas and under very trying circumstances. UNMISS emerged out of the strong support and solidarity that the international community had for our new country, which had been devastated and rendered vulnerable for half a century by war. This initial support now extends to helping the country respond to the crisis that broke out in mid-December 2013 and soon expanded into a full-fledged civil war.

On the other hand, the picture that the report (S/2015/118) paints is very disturbing and a challenge to our pride, dignity and the value of our independence and sovereignty. This, of course, should intensify our motivation to find a remedy with a sense of urgency, in collaboration with our regional and international partners. But for our Government and people, it also gives rise to paradoxical feelings about our place in the international community and our relations with those

with the goodwill to help the country and its suffering people.

As I have repeatedly stated to the Council, painful as the reports of violence and gross violations of human rights in our country are, we do not want to be defensive or in denial. Quite the contrary, as I have just indicated, we appreciate and are grateful that all this is a manifestation of the support that the international community is demonstrating for our beleaguered country and suffering people. The critical question is, what can we do together to address this national crisis.

As I read the report of the Secretary-General and heard the statements just made, I was struck by two elements that may provide a basis for collaboration in resolving the crisis. The first is the impression given that the whole country is in turmoil. We know that while three states are affected by the conflict, the rest of the country, seven states, is experiencing relative peace and harmony. Secondly, the impression conveyed by the report is that the international community, through UNMISS, is virtually the one managing the situation, with the Government manifestly failing in discharging its primary responsibility for protecting and assisting its populations. Worse, it is made to look as though the international community cares more about the people of South Sudan than their own leaders. One has to witness the pain that President Salva Kiir feels and articulates about this senseless war and the suffering it is inflicting on our people to appreciate how much he cares for his country and all his people.

There is a need to bridge the discrepancy between the primary responsibility of the State and the complementary support of the international community, in this case, UNMISS. Although South Sudan is now violently divided between the Government and the opposition, it is important to remember that the leadership was popularly elected and represents the legitimacy of the Government and the sovereignty of the country. It is of course prudent to be connected to both sides and to work on fostering national consensus, but the United Nations should work in collaboration with the current Government to address the practical problems facing the country.

It is one thing to condemn the leadership of the country and threaten the imposition of sanctions, which, as I have had occasion to say to the Council, would only generate an adversarial relationship and aggravate the situation; it is quite another thing to reaffirm that the international community went to South Sudan in the first place to support the country, that recent developments may indeed undermine the nature and magnitude of that support, but that remedies can be found to restore a constructive basis for partnership in the stabilization and development of the country. It would be an ironic double jeopardy to punish a country that is already suffering from an acute crisis. I believe it would be appropriate for UNMISS and the country team to meet with the country's relevant authorities in the Government to discuss and strategize the most constructive way of addressing these crises and concurrently use their mutual strategic understanding as a basis for reaching out to the armed opposition.

What the report does not cover, or even allude to, presumably because of its complexity and sensitivity, is the interconnection between the conflicts within the Sudan and South Sudan that spill over their borders and paradoxically bind them together. Each country accuses the other of supporting its rebels, although they both deny those allegations. But, unless these internal conflicts are addressed to promote a comprehensive regional peace, the two countries will not be at peace internally or between themselves. I realize that this is probably asking too much of the Council and the two countries, but it is a perspective that should not be overlooked.

Needless to say, I am not expecting any miracles in the search for solutions to these challenges. What I am proposing is to bridge the impression that the United Nations is virtually running the country, that the Government is delinquent in discharging its primary responsibility for the protection of its population and that there are no national policies, plans or programmes for addressing the crisis the country is going through. I also believe that it is necessary to put the crisis in the regional context to promote broader regional cooperation, specifically between the Sudan and South Sudan. To develop common ground towards that admittedly ambitious vision, it is in our mutual interests to improve communication, cooperation and complementarity in addressing the challenges within South Sudan and its relationship with the Sudan.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 3.45 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.7393

Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7393rd meeting

Thursday, 26 February 2015, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Wang Min	(China)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Chad	Mr. Gombo
	Chile	Mr. Olguín Cigarroa
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Jordan	Mrs. Kawar
	Lithuania	Mrs. Jakubonė
	Malaysia	Mr. Mayong Onon
	New Zealand	Mr. McLay
	Nigeria	Mr. Laro
	Russian Federation	Mr. Safronkov
	Spain	Mr. González de Linares
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Davison
	United States of America	Ms. Power
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Suárez Moreno

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Abyei (S/2015/77)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Abyei (S/2015/77)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of South Sudan and the Sudan to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2015/134, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by the United States of America.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/77, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Abyei.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Angola, Chad, Chile, China, France, Jordan, Lithuania, Malaysia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2205 (2015).

I now give the floor to the representative of the Sudan.

Mr. Hassan (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I should like to congratulate China on its accession to the presidency of the Security Council for this month.

This month has witnessed the review of the Security Council report on the situation in Abyei following the strategic review of the previous mandate of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA), as well as debates over the renewal of the current mandate, as adopted today in resolution 2205 (2015). I should like to convey my thanks and appreciation to our neighbour Ethiopia for its efforts to establish peace and security through UNISFA.

The resolution adopted today stresses in many of its provisions the importance of implementing the Agreement between the Government of the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement on temporary arrangements for the administration and security of the Abyei Area. It also stresses that the situation can be resolved only through dialogue between the two parties. We therefore express our gratitude for the adoption of the resolution. The 20 June 2011 Agreement, the 29 June 2011 Agreement between the Government of the Sudan and the Government of South Sudan on Border Security and the Joint Political and Security Mechanism, and the 30 July 2011 Agreement on the Border Monitoring Support Mission between the Government of Sudan and the Government of South Sudan, as well as the 27 September 2012 Agreements on Cooperation and Security Arrangements should all be implemented and respected. All of these agreements are a single package that should be applied without selectivity.

As Council members know, the Implementation Matrix for the agreements signed between the two parties has been referred to the Security Council and issued as an official Council document. We reiterate our commitment to implementing the agreements and we believe that the best way to resolve the situation in Abyei should begin with the Joint Political and Security Mechanism, as applied through the administration of the Abyei Police Service. Such a mechanism could fill any gap in the security and administrative level and settle the situation once and for all in order to achieve peaceful coexistance between the Misseriya and Ngok Dinka communities. There is no alternative to dialogue to resolve the situation in Abyei. We stress that the resolution adopted today warns against any unilateral measures to that end.

With regard to the provisions of the resolution regarding the preparations of the Government of the Sudan for the elections in Abyei, I stress that the situation is normal and should not be a source of concern. The Abyei Protocol and related agreements are very clear in that respect. Until the situation is resolved definitively, Abyei is part of the territory of the Sudan. All other constituencies in the Sudan are under similar arrangements, which fall within the purview of our sovereignty and do not conflict with our

commitment to settling the Abyei situation pursuant to the aforementioned agreements.

The resolution again stresses concern regarding the situation of Abyei. The draft paragraph relating to the referendum held by the Ngok Dinka community was originally much longer, but we believe that it is better as it is. However, we appreciate the fact that the Council has rejected all unilateral arrangements. We recall that when the Sudanese army withdrew from Abyei, it did so in accordance with our commitment to the agreements, the road map adopted by the African Union and Security Council resolution 2046 (2012), in which the African Union plan was adopted. At that time, we reaffirmed our commitment to implementing the agreements concerning Abyei and the border security arrangements, including the establishment of a demilitarized border zone, and to activating the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism.

The Security Council understands that any attempt to impose unilateral and hasty procedures in Abyei or to manipulate the situation would be disastrous for Abyei and only further complicate the situation. We therefore hope that our brothers in South Sudan will address the situation and contribute to ending the paralysis, as we are committed to doing as we seek to establish cooperation and peaceful coexistence in order to help the two parties resolve the situation in a sustainable and peaceful way.

In that regard, we recall that the Sudan and President Omer Hassan Al-Bashir have sought to address the strife in South Sudan in a way that would help to restore stability and security there. Indeed, we are directly affected by the situation in South Sudan and are therefore eager to achieve stability there. Before the referendum was held on South Sudan's self-determination, we understood that if that country were separated from us it would never move to another continent but would be our southern neighbour and connected to us forever and that we would therefore have to develop cooperative relations between the two countries and peoples.

During the course of the new UNISFA mandate adopted today, we are determined to achieve progress towards establishing security and administrative mechanisms in Abyei. We hope that a final settlement will be achieved there so as to restore peace and security.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I give the floor to the representative of South Sudan.

Mr. Deng (South Sudan): I am very pleased and honoured to address the Security Council again under your leadership, Sir, on an issue of great interest and concern to us as a country, and to me personally — that is, the crisis situation in Abyei. As I have spoken on numerous occasions on the situation in Abyei and the role of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA), I will try to be brief in my statement.

We sincerely welcome the report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/77) and the renewal of UNISFA's mandate by the adoption earlier of resolution 2205 (2015). Both the report of the Secretary-General and the resolution address issues that are critical to the security and the general welfare of the people of Abyei.

As I have repeatedly said, the deployment of UNISFA is perhaps the most significant positive development for the people of the area in decades. Abyei used to be exposed to unhindered attacks from the North that had led to the virtual depopulation of the area as people fled to the North and the South for safety. We are very grateful to the United Nations and the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia for this major historical reversal of the situation. We also appreciate the role played by successive Force Commanders of UNISFA and their brave men and women in service. We take this opportunity to welcome the appointment of the civilian Head of Mission of UNISFA, whom we expect to work in close partnership with the Force Commander and other stakeholders in the Abyei situation.

While we acknowledge with great appreciation the positive role being played by UNISFA and the sustained commitment of the Security Council, the Secretary-General and the Secretariat to enhance the protection and welfare of the people of the area, I would like to take this opportunity to underscore a number of issues.

First, it cannot be overstated that although the Government of South Sudan and a number of international actors are doing what they can to provide assistance to the area, the people of Abyei are suffering from a vacuum of State responsibility for their protection and service delivery. Secondly, despite the heroic efforts of UNISFA, as the Secretary-General's reports so credibly reflect, they continue to experience high levels of insecurity, with frequent killings, cattle looting and overall physical harassment. Thirdly, all this is done with absolute impunity. With all the murders

that have been committed in the area over decades, not a single culprit has been arrested, tried and punished. This has naturally deterred the displaced Ngok Dinka from returning to the area, despite repeated calls for them to do so. The international community is called upon to redouble its efforts to more effectively fill this protection and assistance vacuum.

A positive step in that direction must be identifying the sources of insecurity and threats to lives without ambiguity or moral equivalence. Although the last report of the Secretary-General has clearly and unequivocally exposed the attacks on the Ngok Dinka, the resolution unfortunately falls back on the old practice of evenhandedness that clouds the facts and the correlative responsibility. For instance, the language,

> "strongly condemning the attacks on United Nations personnel, calling for investigations of these attacks in a swift and thorough manner and to hold those responsible to account" (*resolution 2205 (2015), fourteenth preambular paragraph*)

makes it sound as though these attacks are from both communities, which is not the case. Likewise,

> "expressing its determination to prevent the recurrence of violence against or displacements of civilians and to avert intercommunal conflicts" (*ibid., fifteenth preambular paragraph*)

gives the impression that both communities are responsible, when it is well documented that the attacks in the area are one-sided. Again, "expressing concern over ... 'the decision of the Ngok Dinka to conduct a unilateral referendum'", while only "taking note that ... the Government of the Sudan is proceeding with the preparations for the organization of its national elections in Abyei" (*ibid., eighteenth preambular paragraph*) can hardly be called evenhandedness. Finally, "the denial of security clearances, and the tense security situation in the vicinity of Kadugli" (*ibid., ninth preambular paragraph*) is presented as a shared responsibility, when it is occurring within the Sudan. It is only by credibly identifying the source of problems that appropriate remedies can be found. We hope that future draft resolutions will take these concerns into consideration.

Although good will implementation of all agreements between the Sudan and South Sudan for resolving the Abyei situation is pivotal, the security of the area will ultimately rest on restoring the peaceful and cooperative relations that used to exist between the Ngok Dinka and the Misseriya. While that state of affairs has been severely damaged by armed conflicts, compounded by the linkage of the two communities to Khartoum and Juba, with good will from the key stakeholders, the situation can be much improved and eventually normalized in the interest of all concerned. Steps need to be taken urgently to facilitate dialogue, reconciliation and cooperative coexistence between the Ngok Dinka and the Misseriya. In this connection, we welcome the call for measures aimed at bringing closure to the assassination of the Ngok Dinka Paramount Chief, including by releasing the report of the African Union investigation committee into the assassination, and facilitating traditional methods for resolving such conflicts.

While the traditional rights of seasonal access to water and grazing for the Misseriya must be reaffirmed and guaranteed, the reported plans and actions of the Government of the Sudan to resettle the Misseriya nomads in the Ngok Dinka territory, as defined by the Permanent Court of Arbitration in July 2009, must be stopped, as they only fuel tensions between the two communities. In the interim, until the current tensions ease, UNISFA should be commended for the measures it has taken to improve the security situation by establishing a disengagement line between the Ngok Dinka and the Misseriya during the dry season and determining safe routes for Misseriya's passage to water and grazing.

A conspicuous source of insecurity in Abyei is the presence of the oil police in Diffra, whose Dinka name is Ker. Indeed, one of the incongruities in the area is the tendency to call many Ngok Dinka areas by the names given to them by the Misseriya nomads instead of their original Dinka names. Efforts have been made to correct this tendency without much success.

On the oil police specifically, we welcome the Security Council's reiteration of

> "its demands that immediately and without preconditions the Government of the Sudan redeploy the oil police in Diffra from the Abyei Area" (*ibid., paragraph 10*).

Instead, UNISFA should be mandated to control and protect the wells and the installations in the Area.

There is an urgent need to enhance the security of the area north of Abyei town, encourage the displaced

inhabitants to return to their original home areas, provide them with essential services and stabilize the situation, pending the resolution of the final status of Abyei. In this connection, we welcome with much appreciation the statement that the Council

> "recognizes that absence of the development projects and the inability to deliver basic government services has had an adverse effect on Abyei populations and calls upon ... donors to support reconstruction and capacity-building" (*ibid., paragraph 20*).

Towards that objective, the Government of the Sudan should be urged to make available to the area the agreed percentage of the revenues from the oil produced in the Abyei Area and to agree on a mechanism for their control and disbursement.

The issue of the administrative vacuum in Abyei also needs to be urgently addressed. Abyei needs and deserves arrangements that will ensure autonomous self-administration for the Ngok Dinka, in much the same way the Misseriya administer themselves in their own area. This can then be complemented by special arrangements for addressing issues of mutual concern, such as is now the case with the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee.

To conclude, allow me to restate a point that I introduced earlier. Given the obvious lack of State protection and assistance for the Ngok Dinka of Abyei, the international community is urgently called upon to step in and fill the vacuum. Much has already been done and is being done, especially through UNISFA, but a great deal more needs to be done. Abandoning the area can no longer be an option.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I give the floor to the representative of the Sudan to make a further statement.

Mr. Hassan (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I asked for the floor once again just to give some clarifications regarding the oil police around the Diffra oil complex. I would like to reaffirm, as we have already stated, that the oil police currently in Abyei is present pending the establishment of a joint patrol police. Once the Abyei Police Service has been established, we will withdraw the police that are currently there. These forces are stationed only around the oil complex.

With respect to the insecurity in Abyei, this is a cause for concern to us too, as Ambassador Deng has pointed out. We are working to create the necessary mechanisms because security is a problem for the other parties and for us alike. The Diffra oil complex has suffered three sabotage attempts in recent months. We have therefore had to maintain this unarmed police force there so as to provide symbolic protection for the oil complex. As soon as a police force to protect the oil complex has been put in place, we will withdraw the forces presently stationed in Abyei.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): There are no further names inscribed on the list of speakers.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 3.35 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.7394

Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7394th meeting
Thursday, 26 February 2015, 3.35 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Wang Min	(China)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Chad	Mr. Gombo
	Chile	Mr. Olguín Cigarroa
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Jordan	Mrs. Kawar
	Lithuania	Ms. Jakubonė
	Malaysia	Mr. Haniff
	New Zealand	Mr. McLay
	Nigeria	Mr. Laro
	Russian Federation	Mr. Safronkov
	Spain	Mr. González de Linares Palou
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Ms. Power
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014) and 2191 (2014) (S/2015/124)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.35 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014) and 2191 (2014) (S/2015/124)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and Turkey to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Ms. Kyung-wha Kang, Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator; and Mr. António Guterres, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/124, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014) and 2191 (2014).

I now give the floor to Ms. Kyung-wha Kang.

Ms. Kang: On behalf of Under-Secretary-General and Emergency Relief Coordinator Valerie Amos, I would like to deliver the following statement.

As Syria enters its fifth year of conflict, violence and brutality continue unabated and with total impunity. The indiscriminate use of explosive weapons in populated areas by all parties claimed more lives this month and displaced thousands. Government aerial bombardments, including the use of barrel bombs, and attacks by armed opposition groups have intensified in many areas, including Aleppo, Dar'a and rural Damascus. The parties to the conflict continue to kill civilians and target civilians and civilian infrastructure, including vital public services such as water and electricity, in blatant disregard of resolution 2139 (2014) and international humanitarian law, condemning people to further unnecessary suffering. Over 2 million people in Aleppo and Dar'a governorates have been affected by the wilful denial of water and electricity by parties to the conflict this month. Of the 212,000 people who are besieged in conditions that deteriorate every day, only 304 were reached with food in January. Those 304 were in Yarmouk, where 18,000 people are in desperate need.

In the other besieged locations, the parties continued to restrict access severely. The requests to deliver assistance to people in east Ghouta, which were mentioned in our previous statement to the Council (see S/PV.7369), were denied by the Government — nor could we deliver to the towns of Nubul or Zahraa, which have been besieged by opposition forces since May 2014.

In Raqqa and Deir ez-Zor, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant has closed down the offices of several organizations, including the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, a key implementing partner. Some 600,000 people have not received food assistance in those governorates since December 2014. The sick or wounded often have nowhere safe to get treatment. According to Physicians for Human Rights, there were four attacks on medical facilities in January, and five medical staff were killed. On 23 February, a car bomb reportedly killed at least four civilians in the parking area of a hospital in Qardaha, Latakia governorate.

There are continued challenges to the provision of medical supplies, in particular surgical items. However, in one development, the World Health Organization (WHO) succeeded in sending life-saving medicine and medical supplies this week from Damascus to hospitals and public health centres in the eastern part of Aleppo city and rural Aleppo, for approximately 60,500 medical treatments.

At the same time, WHO surgical items, UNICEF midwifery and diarrhoea kits, and United Nations Population Fund reproductive health kits were removed by Government security personnel from an inter-agency convoy travelling to Al-Wa'er, in Homs governorate. This follows a previous refusal to allow medical supplies into Al-Wa'er in November.

Every month we report on the same violations; the numbers change but the pattern remains the same. The parties to the conflict continue to act with impunity, killing and abducting civilians, denying access and removing vital supplies from convoys. This pattern

must be broken. Specifically, the siege that currently affects 212,000 people must be lifted. We must ensure that everyone in all parts of Syria has access to medical supplies, including surgical supplies. The use of blockades of humanitarian aid and of basic services, including water and electricity, must stop, as must the indiscriminate attacks on civilians, including through barrel bombs, which have come to characterize this conflict.

The Council must do everything in its power to hold the parties accountable and achieve the aforementioned changes. Resolution 2139 (2014) is extensive in its scope, and the Council's concerns and recommendations, as set out in the resolution, must be respected.

Humanitarian organizations operating from within Syria and from neighbouring countries continue to reach millions of people in need month after month. Last month, some 3.4 million people were reached with food assistance while hundreds of thousands were also reached with medicines, household items and other supplies. Cross-border shipments by the United Nations and partners have increased since the adoption of resolution 2165 (2014). Some 950,000 people have been reached with food, 880,000 with critical household items, 340,000 with water and sanitation, and nearly 470,000 with medical supplies. This complements and is in addition to the existing non-governmental organization programmes that again reached over a million people last month. But it is not enough. More effort must be made to de-escalate the violence, protect people and enable humanitarian organizations to give greater support.

We are encouraged by the efforts made by the Secretary-General's Special Envoy, Staffan de Mistura, to secure a freeze in fighting in some parts of Aleppo. In hopes that the freeze will materialize, humanitarian agencies have developed plans to scale up aid deliveries throughout the eastern part of Aleppo City. Our plans include the provision of emergency food and other supplies and the rehabilitation of basic services, including electricity and waste management, removal of debris, getting children back into school, and repairing and renovating damaged homes. Humanitarian agencies are already delivering assistance in Aleppo but much more needs to be done. The United Nations will make use of any additional opportunities, including through the freeze, to expand humanitarian access.

However, we are extremely concerned that two staff members of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, doing essential work with opposition parties on the ground to secure access for the delivery of urgently needed humanitarian supplies, have been asked to leave the country without any reason given. This will hinder our work tremendously. We call upon the Government of Syria to reverse its decision so that we are able to continue our life-saving work for all Syrians in need.

In addition to the many operational constraints we face, including insecurity and interference by the parties to the conflict, our response cannot keep up with the needs of Syria's people because we do not have enough funding. By the end of last year, the Syria Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan for 2014 was just 48 per cent funded. We cannot afford the dire consequences of failing to meet those needs. We can do more, if we have more money to do so. Lack of funding has already forced the World Food Programme to reduce food rations by 30 per cent. In the longer term, if we do not receive what we need, we will only be able to provide food to the extremely vulnerable. For every $1 million the WHO cannot raise in Syria, some 227,000 people lose vital health services, and unless urgent funding is received before May 2015, a million children who are out of school will not be able to have access to alternative education options. Malnutrition programmes for up to a million children will have to be halted or reduced.

The humanitarian community has come together to bring all operations in Syria — cross-line and cross-border — under one single response plan for 2015. This will enable better identification of needs to allow for a more effective response. But in order for it to work, we need the resources. Kuwait has generously agreed to host a third pledging conference for Syrians in need on 31 March. We need high-level representation at that conference and meaningful pledges that will make a difference on the ground. We look to the members of the Security Council to show leadership to end the barbaric and brutal warfare in Syria. We are running out of words to describe the terrible human and humanitarian consequences.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Ms. Kang for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Guterres.

Mr. Guterres: Briefing the Security Council in 2013 (see S/PV.7000), I said that the war in Syria had not only unleashed the worst humanitarian crisis of our

times but it was also posing a terrible threat to regional and global peace and security. This is the reality we face today.

Iraq saw the most frightening and complete spillover of an internal conflict into a neighbouring country in recent history. Lebanon has been on near-permanent security alert, and there have been increasing threats even to Jordan in the past months. As many as 20,000 foreign fighters from over 50 countries have reportedly travelled to Syria and Iraq since 2011, with their number nearly doubling during the course of last year.

Meanwhile, the Syrian refugee crisis has overwhelmed existing response capacities, with 3.8 million registered refugees in the neighbouring countries. Lebanon and Jordan have seen their populations grow in the space of a few years to a point they were prepared to reach only in several decades. One third of the Lebanese population today is Palestinian or Syrian. Jordan is facing a similar challenge. Turkey has now become the biggest refugee-hosting country in the world. In addition, more than 2 million Iraqis were internally displaced in 2014 and some 220,000 sought refuge in other countries.

The continued growth in displacement is staggering. But at the same time the nature of the refugee crisis is now changing. As the level of despair rises and the available protection space shrinks, we are approaching a dangerous turning point. After years in exile, refugees' resources were depleted long ago, and their living conditions are drastically deteriorating. I have met middle-class families with children who are barely surviving on the streets and are praying to make it through the winter. Well over half of Syrian refugees in Lebanon are living in insecure dwellings — up from a third last year — and a survey of 40,000 Syrian families in Jordan found that two-thirds were living below the absolute poverty line. One father of four compared life as a refugee to being stuck in quicksand — every time he moves, he sinks further. With humanitarian appeals systematically underfunded, there is simply not enough assistance.

At the same time, host communities are severely overstretched. The refugee influx has had a heavy impact on the economies and societies, mostly of Lebanon, Jordan and northern Iraq, overwhelming social services, infrastructure and Government resources. International support is far from keeping pace with the magnitude of the needs. As host countries face growing security risks due to the regional spread of the conflict and do not get the help they need to cope with the refugee influx, Syrians are finding it increasingly difficult to reach safety.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) monthly registration figures in Lebanon have dropped nearly 80 per cent compared with early 2014, and the number of people entering Jordan has also dropped substantially. Meanwhile, it is important to underline that refugees continue to cross the border into Turkey in significant numbers. The Turkish budget has already spent around $6 billion in direct assistance to Syrian refugees, and, in a landmark decision last year, the Turkish Government's temporary protection decree gave Syrians access to the country's labour market as well as to free education and health care.

But in the global context I described, it is no surprise that growing desperation is forcing more and more Syrian refugees to move further afield. The dramatic situation in the Mediterranean illustrates this, with Syrians accounting for one third of the nearly 220,000 boat arrivals last year.

With the refugee situation growing more protracted and more desperate, almost 2 million Syrian refugees under 18 risk becoming a lost generation. Many of the over 100,000 refugee children born in exile could face the risk of statelessness. If this issue is not properly addressed, this crisis in the making could have huge consequences for the future not only of Syria but of the whole region.

As humanitarian resources dwindle, abandoning refugees to hopelessness only exposes them to even greater suffering, exploitation and dangerous abuse. Abandoning their hosts to manage the situation on their own could result in serious regional destabilization and more security concerns elsewhere in the world.

It should be obvious that in order to prevent this and to preserve the protection space in the region, refugees and host countries need massive international support. The regional refugee and resilience plan aims to bring together the humanitarian and longer-term efforts of host Governments and over 200 United Nations and non-governmental organization (NGO) partners. Its programmes are designed to be funded not only from humanitarian but increasingly from development cooperation budgets.

I hope that the upcoming Kuwait III conference will play a determining role in stabilizing the situation

in the refugee-hosting countries. Beyond the immediate humanitarian priorities, it is crucial that development actors fund the plan's resilience pillar and the host Governments' plans. Countries such as Lebanon and Jordan need much more financial assistance, not only to local refugee-hosting communities, but also through Government budget support for the necessary structural investments in health-care systems, education, water and electricity supply, and other public infrastructure, which is cracking under the tremendous pressure.

As discussed at length during the Berlin Conference, the Syrian situation illustrates the inadequacies of today's development cooperation policies at a time of multiplying conflicts. To address this, bilateral and multilateral donors, as well as international financial institutions, should review existing criteria and priorities. It is absurd, for example, that Lebanon and Jordan have no access to World Bank grants because they are considered middle-income countries.

As High Commissioner for Refugees, it breaks my heart to see Syrian families fleeing from a horrible war, forced to risk their lives again, on unsafe boats, to find protection in Europe. Since the start of 2015, more than 370 people have died trying to cross the Mediterranean; that is one person drowning for every 20 who make it. But Italy's Mare Nostrum operation has ended, and the European Union's Triton initiative is limited in both mandate and resources. Europe must step up its capacity to save lives with a robust search-and-rescue operation in the Central Mediterranean, or thousands more, including many, many Syrians, will perish.

To reduce the number of people getting on boats in the first place, more legal avenues are needed for Syrians to seek protection in third countries. Several States provide resettlement and humanitarian admission programmes, but the needs far exceed available spaces. We believe that one tenth of Syrian refugees would require resettlement as an adequate solution to their protection situation.

Flexible visa policies, expanded family reunification, academic scholarships and private-sponsor schemes must complement these measures. Following the example of countries such as Germany and Sweden, other States in Europe and the Gulf region should consider offering legal access, with more opportunities, so as to alleviate some of the pressure on Syria's neighbours and give more refugees an alternative way of reaching safety.

Without such alternatives, the number of people taking to the seas will continue to grow. Not only are they facing serious human rights violations at the hands of smugglers and traffickers; we now also see armed groups threatening to enter the smuggling business for their own purposes of sowing fear.

This should remind us that protecting refugees also means tackling racism and xenophobia. In today's climate of rising panic, it worries me deeply that refugees are becoming mixed up with security concerns, confronting hostility in places where they thought they were safe. In several public debates, they have been made scapegoats for any number of problems, from terrorism to economic hardship and perceived threats to their host communities' way of life. But we need to remember that the primary threat is not from refugees, but to them.

Syrians are now the biggest refugee population under UNHCR's mandate. As their number keeps growing and they become more vulnerable, the serious repercussions this has across the region only highlight the obvious: the urgent need for the international community to bring together all key actors and put an end to the conflict. There are no winners in this war; everyone is losing. But the highest price is being paid by the refugees and the other innocent victims inside the country.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Guterres for his briefing.

I shall now give the floor to the members of the Security Council.

Mrs. Kawar (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like at the outset to thank you for having facilitated the taking up of this item at an open meeting in order to shed light on the various dimensions of the humanitarian crisis in Syria, the largest humanitarian crisis in the world today. It is important that the international community be aware of the deliberations in the Security Council in order to know how to respond to this crisis and its implications for neighbouring countries and security in the region.

I should like also to thank the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs not only for the assistance they have given Jordan to help it deal with this humanitarian crisis, but also for all the efforts they have made.

The crisis in Syria has been raging for more than four years now. The Jordanian people feels the pain of the Syrian people and continues to work, along with the Government, to find a political solution to the crisis. I will not repeat what is stated in the reports of the United Nations and of non-governmental organizations on the situation in Syria. Words cannot describe the magnitude of the tragedy and the suffering of women and children.

I wish to stress today the need for the international community to break its silence regarding the heinous acts and atrocities committed in Syria, including attacks against civilians and public infrastructure such as hospitals and water and electricity supplies, with full impunity. We must also emphasize once again how important it is that the parties to the conflict, including the Syrian regime, end the use of barrel bombs, which is a flagrant violation of humanitarian law. All the parties must commit to complying with humanitarian law and the relevant Security Council resolutions by ending this practice.

I also believe that the international community should increase its efforts to enable humanitarian aid to reach the more than 12 million Syrians in Syria who need it, particularly in the areas under siege. For its part, Jordan is committed to implementing all the relevant Security Council resolutions designed to mitigate the humanitarian situation in cooperation with France and Spain. We are also working to achieve adoption of other resolutions aimed at saving lives. Jordan will continue to facilitate the passage of humanitarian convoys through the Ramtha corridor, and we call on the United Nations and its partners to take as much advantage as possible of the resources made available to them by Jordan in making use of this humanitarian corridor.

The humanitarian crisis has continued to worsen, increasingly exacerbated as it is by extremism and terrorism, and is taking a heavy toll on the countries of the region, which are having to take in an unending number of refugees. We have opened our doors to Syrians since the beginning of the crisis, when Jordanians took Syrians into their own homes, before we had built refugee camps, one of which is now the size of Jordan's fourth-largest city. We are currently hosting a million refugees and providing them with as much as is in our power. I would like to emphasize various concepts that Jordan has been highlighting since the Berlin Conference on the Syrian Refugee Situation, particularly that of fatigue. Not just donor fatigue — because we have still not been able to supply all the aid that the refugees need — no, I am talking about the fatigue of Syria's neighbours. Jordan has been exhausted by the assistance it has given to the Syrian refugees.

Now more than ever, we urge the international community to shoulder its responsibility to help Jordan and the other countries sheltering Syria's refugees to take them in and provide them with what they need. We are grateful to Kuwait for volunteering to organize a donor conference, and we call on all the relevant parties to participate. We also call for implementation of the final declaration of the Berlin Conference, which emphasized economic, social and humanitarian needs and security issues in the countries bordering Syria. We stress that it is vital that countries help to find a solution to resettling the refugees.

There can be no humanitarian solution to the crisis in Syria. The only solution is political, one that can enable the country to begin a political transition that can re-establish security and stability, restore social cohesion among Syria's peoples and reinstate a safe environment so that Syrian citizens can return home. In the absence of a political solution, extremism will spread around the region and destroy it. We stress that it is vital that peaceful solutions be found, and we urge the various countries involved to continue to seek them, in accordance with the Geneva final communiqué (S/2012/522, annex) and Egypt's efforts. We also call on the various entities of the United Nations to continue to work to settle the crisis in Syria. We also support the plan of Special Envoy de Mistura aimed at ending the violence and enabling humanitarian aid to reach the region.

Mr. McLay (New Zealand): I would particularly like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Kang and High Commissioner Guterres for their very helpful briefings to the Council.

Last Sunday, 22 February, marked the first anniversary of resolution 2139 (2014), whereby the Council took action to reduce the suffering of the Syrian people. And yet, as our briefers just confirmed so graphically, one year later, much of resolution 2139 (2014) is being ignored by the parties to the conflict, particularly the Syrian Government. Indiscriminate attacks, including with barrel bombs, have continued with devastating impact on civilians on the ground. Around 212,000 people remain besieged, administrative hurdles impede humanitarian access and Government

security personnel remove surgical and medical supplies from humanitarian convoys, as Assistant Secretary-General Kang told us. Serious violations and abuses of international humanitarian and human-rights law continue, with direct impact on humanitarian assistance and access. All that is unacceptable, and the Security Council must do more to ensure that its own resolution is implemented. We cannot stand by as if we were spectators to this unfolding tragedy.

The first step must be to retain the attention of the international community, through the Council, on the full range of humanitarian issues that arise under resolution 2139 (2014); to break the silence, as Jordan urged us. With the Syrian crisis now in its fifth year, it has become business as usual, to quote the Secretary-General's report (S/2015/124). While complacency and fatigue are risks, they are simply unacceptable when facing a humanitarian crisis on this scale.

Monthly briefings on the humanitarian situation in Syria help to keep the crisis on the Security Council's radar. But New Zealand believes we need to reinvigorate those proceedings by making them more thematic in scope. As a specific step, we propose that going forward, the monthly briefers should focus on certain specific humanitarian challenges. As a starting point, they could be the five challenges identified by the Secretary-General in his report — ensuring access for medical and surgical supplies; lifting the siege on 212,000 people; ending the practice of using denial of key services as a weapon of war; rebuilding Syria's education system and addressing the indiscriminate attacks on civilians, including through the use of barrel bombs. We also support having briefings from other relevant speakers, in addition to the Office of Humanitarian Affairs, such as this month's report from High Commissioner Guterres. We would welcome continuing that initiative in future months by inviting other speakers.

As both Assistant Secretary-General Kang and High Commissioner Guterres emphasized, funding for the humanitarian response inside Syria has not kept pace with the scale of the needs. New Zealand therefore welcomes next month's international humanitarian pledging conference for Syria in Kuwait, to be hosted by the Amir of Kuwait. We commend the generosity and commitment of neighbouring countries, notably Jordan, Turkey, Lebanon and Egypt, in assisting the more than 3.8 million people who have had to flee Syria. Government services and local community services are under immense strain in all of those countries.

Last month, New Zealand's Foreign Minister visited Jordan, where he saw first-hand the impact on host communities and the plight of those who have had to flee, particularly children. Following his visit, New Zealand announced a NZ$1 million contribution to deliver basic education and skills training to more than 1,800 vulnerable young people in Jordan. Overall, New Zealand is extremely concerned both about the more than 2.1 million children inside Syria itself who are currently either out of school or attending classes irregularly, and about the long-term impact of the collapse of the school system. From previously having a school attendance rate of almost 100 per cent, Syria now has the second lowest in the world. About 670,000 children are being deprived of education following the closing of schools by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, or Daesh. We know that disaffected, ill-educated youth are more likely to join radical groups and to take up arms, with obvious destabilizing consequences for the whole region. There are also worrying reports from recent evacuees from Ghouta of minors being forcibly recruited by non-State armed groups.

In neighbouring countries, almost 2 million Syrian children are living as refugees, placing a heavy burden on local education systems. Almost half of all Syrian children living as refugees remained out of school through the 2013-2014 school year. Having lost their schools, having lost their homes, these children are now also losing their chance to build a future. The High Commissioner described them as the "lost generation".

Let me come back to Security Council resolution 2139 (2013). One year after its adoption, the Council must now take a leadership role and address the very serious gaps in the implementation of that resolution. New Zealand commits to working with other Council members, stakeholder countries and those on the ground to determine what we can do to ensure that the Council's own resolution — our express wishes — are fully implemented with no "ifs", "buts", "maybes", prevarication or bureaucratic blockages. We commit to finding ways to maintain pressure on the parties concerned to abide by international law. In parallel, we will continue to support the Council's renewed focus on the political track, without which there can be no resolution of this humanitarian crisis.

New Zealand welcomes initiatives to give momentum to a political solution based on the Geneva

communiqué (S/2012/522, annex), including the recent meetings in Cairo and Moscow, and we commend those who initiated those processes. Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura's freeze proposal is also important. Modest in scope, it still offers the best short-term chance to alleviate the suffering of the Syrian people. We now look for action, not words, from the Syrian Government and the other parties to the conflict, in working with the Special Envoy to implement that proposal. The Council should stand ready to show the leadership urged on us by Assistant Secretary-General Kang, and to act if that action is not forthcoming.

Mr. González de Linares Palou (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank both Ms. Kang and Mr. Guterres for their briefings. The work they are undertaking, together with the humanitarian personnel of the United Nations and other organizations, with a view to alleviating the suffering of the Syrian population is remarkable and worthy of our respect, admiration and appreciation.

Since 2011, 72 humanitarian personnel working in Syria have died, including 17 United Nations staff members. We believe that we owe them, their loved ones and all the victims of this conflict more than words. We are determined to ensure that their sacrifice will not have been in vain and that it serves to bring peace to Syria.

All Council members know that the solution to the Syrian conflict is a political rather than military one. We all know that humanitarian assistance and protection for victims are a moral, legal imperative. However, they are not enough to put an end to the suffering of the civilian population. They will not be enough until the parties involved cease to commit war crimes, abuses and massive violations of human rights and humanitarian law. In that regard, we will never tire of saying that the primary responsibility to protect its own population lies with the Syrian regime, and that all parties are required to comply with the exigencies of international humanitarian law. I believe that we all recognize that the humanitarian dimension, which is absolutely necessary, should not serve as a pretext to shirk or justify our collective failure to find a political resolution to this crisis.

Having said all of this, and despite our limitations, there are reasons for hope. Overcoming our differences from last year, we have been able to reach agreement on an essential issue, and have adopted resolution 2139 (2014). One of the objectives of that resolution was that humanitarian aid should arrive as quickly and efficiently as possible to those most in need. To that end, the Security Council adopted resolutions 2165 (2014) and 2191 (2014) . The border crossings were opened and, though limited, they have nevertheless proven to be effective in helping difficult-to-access areas and populations.

The aforementioned resolutions contain humanitarian standards to which all parties to the Syrian conflict must comply, and which the international community is compelled to enforce. We know that this is not happening. The successive reports of the Secretary-General have duly and fairly recalled the repeated failures to comply with these resolutions. If this type of debate and such reports have a purpose, it is to remind us of the obligations we have assumed. I am not concerned by the fatigue that this could cause. It is a fatigue that I am willing to take on, and that cannot be compared to the suffering of the victims whom we are unable to help.

What concerns me is that today, a year after the adoption of resolution 2139 (2014), barrel bombs and mortars continue to be used against civilian populations. What concerns me is that there are still more than 200,000 individuals under siege and used as hostages in Ghouta, Yarmouk, Nubul and Zahraa, and that access to essential services, such as water, continues to be used as a weapon of war. What concerns me is the continued failure to respect the responsibility to protect schools and hospitals, and that surgical and sanitary material are unfairly removed from humanitarian convoys before reaching their destination. I am concerned that thousands of minors are being recruited to fight, and that the rights of hundreds of thousands of women and girls continue to be systematically violated.

What worries me the most is that the Security Council is acting as a passive spectator of this situation. In his report, the Secretary-General has said that "the conflict has become business as usual" (*S/2015/124, p. 10*). It is terrifying to hear such a thing. We have the responsibility to respond, and Spain will do all it can to that end.

I should like to propose a pragmatic approach aimed at ensuring that the Council's action has a real impact on the ground, so that it can contribute, howsoever minimally, to mitigating the desperation of 12 million people. This approach has three phases that should be rolled out simultaneously.

First, we must identify the instruments at the Council's disposal to ensure that the parties to the

conflict comply with the exigencies of resolution 2139 (2014). Secondly, it is essential that we determine our priorities. The Secretary-General lays out five areas in which progress is urgently required. Spain believes that those are indeed the areas on which the Council should focus its efforts. Thirdly and lastly, we must clearly state that the action of the Council and its good offices should not only be extended to the parties to the conflict, but to all actors, including Member States, that can bring influence to bear on the parties.

I will conclude, but not without first calling attention to the following point. Some time ago, the Syrian conflict became a regional problem due, among other reasons, to the enormous number of Syrian refugees who spilled over the borders with neighbouring countries. The United Nations system must adapt its priorities. We are clearly facing a humanitarian crisis that has a direct impact on the development of the region as a whole. For that reason, the agencies of the system should set aside business as usual and rapidly adapt themselves to the new needs of the communities and refugee-hosting countries. Jordan, Turkey, Lebanon, Iraq and Egypt in particular are making enormous efforts, for which we must thank them. We must support them not merely in words, but with deeds. The upcoming Kuwait conference, to be held on 31 March, will offer an excellent opportunity to do just that. Ensuring its success would be a way to show that we mean what we say. We owe it to the victims of the Syrian conflict and to the societies that are hosting them at great sacrifice.

Mr. Gombo (Chad) (*spoke in French*): I would like to commend you, Mr. President, for convening this open meeting on the situation in Syria. I would also like to thank Ms. Kang Kyung-wha, Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, and Mr. António Guterres, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, for their detailed briefings.

The Syrian conflict will soon enter its fifth year, as the security situation continues to deteriorate and the humanitarian toll becomes worse by the day, with more than 200,000 civilians dead and a high number of refugees and internally displaced persons, without real prospects for a political settlement. Bombs, mortar attacks, explosive devices, along with a lack of food and water, are becoming the daily plight of civilians in Syria. It is unacceptable that the parties to the conflict continue to violate human rights and to target peaceful civilians and infrastructure. All parties must respect the rules of international humanitarian law and the relevant provisions of resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014) and 2191 (2014). The Government of Syria has the obligation under international law to ensure the free movement of assistance and access to vulnerable populations, as well as the protection of humanitarian workers and their facilities.

With the increasing deterioration of the humanitarian situation, the international community must do more, be united and bring pressure to bear on all the Syrian parties to lift the obstacles to humanitarian assistance and allow unhindered access to all areas in need. We would like to pay well-deserved tribute to all United Nations humanitarian agencies and partners, who are carrying out their work under very difficult and often dangerous circumstances. We encourage the international community to increase its assistance and to do more to support United Nations humanitarian agencies in order to allow them to help populations, in particular during the winter, which is especially harsh in the area.

We continue to think that there are no military solutions to the Syrian conflict and that it is vital to actively search for an appropriate political solution that would put an end to the suffering of the people. Against that backdrop, Chad supports the tireless efforts of Mr. Staffan de Mistura, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, who is doing his utmost to negotiate with the parties in Aleppo to provide better humanitarian access and to clear the way for an exit out of the crisis. Chad also supports the efforts made recently by Russia and Egypt, which made it possible to bring together Syrian stakeholders to seek political solutions to the crisis.

In conclusion, we underscore that the humanitarian tragedy in Syria should tug at our collective conscience. All regional and international efforts should be geared towards finding solutions. We believe that a comprehensive and definitive solution to the Syrian conflict should also address terrorism in the region, which is a serious threat to international peace and security.

Mr. Delattre (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank Ms. Kang Kyung-wha, Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, and Mr. António Guterres, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, for their briefings. We would also like to reiterate our appreciation for the outstanding work done by the teams of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Office of the United Nations High

Commissioner for Refugees and other United Nations agencies on the ground, as well as all their partners, who are carrying out their duties at risk to their lives. It is unacceptable that humanitarian workers in Syria are being targeted, attacked, abducted and killed: 72 workers have died since March 2011, and I would like to pay tribute to them.

As of 15 March, the conflict in Syria will have been going on for four years. Yet, in report after report, it is unfortunately clear that the humanitarian situation is deteriorating at an alarming rate and that there is no end in sight to the crisis. Despite the Council's strong message to the Syrian regime and the armed groups, through the renewal of the delivery of humanitarian assistance to Syria and its reminder to the parties to the conflict of their obligation to respect international humanitarian law, the situation remains dire, as was forcefully alluded to by Ms. Kang and Mr. Guterres.

The statistics are unassailable: 220,000 dead, 12.2 million people in need of assistance, 7.6 million internally displaced persons, 3.8 million refugees, 4.8 million in areas that are hard to reach and 212,000 people besieged without the means to survive. Aerial bombardment, including the indiscriminate use of barrels bombs by Government forces, continue to claim civilian lives. The recent report by Human Rights Watch states that, since February 2014, the Government has bombed at least 450 sites in the region of Dara'a and 1,000 sites in Aleppo using barrels bombs. The parties to the conflict also continue to deliberately target civilian facilities and property, including infrastructure and vital services and hospitals, which is contrary to all the rules of humanitarian law, respect for human dignity and the most basic principles of humankind. The deliberate interference in humanitarian operations, the limits imposed on access to assistance throughout the country and the administrative obstruction by the regime only exacerbate the suffering of a battered people. This must stop. The obstacles to the delivery of humanitarian assistance to besieged areas, blocking cross-border access and the proliferation of bureaucratic obstacles are practices contrary to Security Council resolutions. Moreover, pursuant to resolution 2139 (2014), an end must be put to impunity to violations of international humanitarian law and human rights. Those responsible for such violations in Syria must be brought to justice.

The conclusions of the latest report (S/2015/124) on the implementation of resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014) and 2191 (2014) are clear. They call for immediate action by the parties to the conflict, including the lifting of the various sieges, which affect 212,000 people, removing obstacles to the delivery of medical and surgical equipment, ending the use of basic services, such as water and electricity, as a weapon of war and halting indiscriminate attacks against civilians, especially the use of barrels bombs. As we know, there are many obstacles. We must all collectively bring pressure to bear on the Syrian regime to immediately remove the obstacles to alleviate the suffering of the Syrian people.

The current situation in Aleppo and Ghouta only shows that the regime remains deaf to the calls of the international community. The bombings carried out by Government forces in early February in Ghouta, east of Damascus, left more than 200 dead and 1,000 wounded. France condemned those bombings in the strongest way, while recalling that they violated the most basic principles of international humanitarian law and could constitute war crimes.

Whatever the measures taken to limit the cost of the conflict in human lives and reduce the people's suffering, the humanitarian tragedy in Syria can end only with the emergence of a political solution. The conditions must therefore be created for a political solution. First of all, the regime must immediately cease aerial bombardment, the use of barrel bombs and indiscriminate shelling targeting civilians, which are prohibited by the resolutions of the Security Council. Secondly, our objective remains, more than ever, to promote a genuine political transition, based on the Geneva communiqué (S/2012/523, annex), and not a simple makeover for the regime. Through its brutal repression and rejection of any transition over the past four years, Bashar Al-Assad has fanned the flamed of extremism and chaos. As long as Bashar Al-Assad remains in power, ISIS and the Al-Nusra Front will continue to grow in strengthen. Renewed commitment on the part of the United Nations to a resumption of the political process is essential in this regard. The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria, Staffan de Mistura, must, of course, play an important role in this regard.

A focused dialogue on the terms of a political transition based on the Geneva communiqué must be resumed bringing together the major parties concerned among the international community. We must also support the reconciliation initiatives of the various

components of the Syrian Opposition around the Syrian National Coalition. Without a moderate Opposition that is strong and credible, no political transition will be able to succeed. To achieve any lasting improvement in the humanitarian situation in Syria will require a political solution that will itself require the decisive commitment of the Security Council.

Ms. Power (United States of America): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Kang and High Commissioner Guterres for their powerful presentations.

One year ago, the Security Council adopted resolution 2139 (2014), aimed at addressing the humanitarian and human rights catastrophe in Syria. As today's briefings made clear, the humanitarian crises have only deepened. There are multiple crises. It is estimated that 12.2 million people need humanitarian assistance in Syria. At this time last year, 9.3 million people were said to need humanitarian assistance. That is nearly 3 million more people who need aid to survive, in just a year. Let us think about that. That is why it is absolutely crucial that all donors make generous commitments at the humanitarian pledging conference in Kuwait in March; commitments that are commensurate with the magnitude of Syria's crisis. That is what the United States plans to do.

While the international community absolutely must meet the immediate and dire needs of the Syrian people, we must also face the fact that humanitarian assistance is a band-aid: it must be accompanied by more intense political pressure to stop the violence and widespread abuses that are fuelling the crisis.

Although more people in Syria need humanitarian aid than ever before, the Al-Assad regime also seems more intent on denying aid and causing civilian harm than ever before. Resolution 2139 (2014) called on the Syrian parties to immediately cease the indiscriminate use of weapons in populated areas, including through aerial bombardment using barrel bombs. Yet in the year since the resolution was adopted, according to the Syrian Network for Human Rights, the Assad regime has dropped at least 1,950 barrel bombs, which have killed at least 6,480 people, 95 per cent of whom were civilians. According to the Human Rights Watch report released earlier this week, satellite imagery identified at least 450 distinct major damage sites in 10 opposition-held towns and villages in the Dara'a governorate, and more than 1,000 major damage sites in the Aleppo governorate, between February 2014 and January of this year. The Human Rights Watch report shows that many impact sites have damage signatures consistent with the detonation of large, air-dropped munitions, including improvised barrel and conventional bombs dropped by helicopters. Yet in spite of this clear evidence, Assad cheerfully denied that his forces used barrel bombs and called any such claims, "a childish story" — a particularly grotesque choice of words, given that well over 10,000 children have been killed in the conflict so far.

The recently released report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic (A/HRC/28/69) documents many attacks on civilians. One of them occurred on Aleppo's al-Shaar neighbourhood on 6 November. The first barrel bomb reportedly killed civilians in its area of impact and buried more in rubble. When others rushed to the area to dig out the people buried and assist the wounded, the Government dropped a second barrel bomb. At least 15 people were killed in all, most of them women and children. Some of the wounded later died in field hospitals, according to the report, due to the lack of necessary medical supplies.

The lack of medical supplies is no accident; it is the result of the Al-Assad regime's routine confiscation of medical and surgical supplies transported by United Nations convoys. The United Nations and its implementing partners have tried to be maximally transparent with the Syrian regime by allowing the Government to inspect cross-line shipments, going beyond the provisions in resolutions 2165 (2014) and 2191 (2014). Yet, even when these regime approvals for cross-line operations are granted, the regime seizes medical supplies, such as surgical items, midwifery kits and rehydration kits, which could save the lives of mothers, small children and babies. The Council was clear in its demand that all parties allow delivery of medical assistance and cease depriving civilians of food and medicine indispensable for their survival in resolution 2139 (2014).

The Physicians for Human Rights report that Assistant Secretary-General Kang mentioned documents 228 attacks on 179 separate medical facilities. Of these, Physicians for Human Rights found, 90 per cent were carried out by regime forces. To date, according to Physicians for Human Rights, 145 medical personnel have been executed or tortured to death in Syria; 139 of those individual killings were carried out by Syrian Government forces or by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

In Yarmouk, 18,000 civilians — most of them Palestinians refugees — are virtually cut off from assistance and surrounded by fighting. In 2014, the United Nations was only able to provide the equivalent of 400 calories per day for each inhabitant of Yarmouk — the equivalent of two cups of rice — due to the extremely limited access provided by the Syrian regime. If members have not seen the photos of the kids inside Yarmouk, they should force themselves to stare at their sunken, hollow faces and glossed eyes. This is what Al-Assad's regime has done to children, and he is under insufficient pressure from his backers to do something as simple as let food through. And Yarmouk is not an outlier: of the 212,000 Syrians living in besieged areas, 185,000 of them, or 87 per cent, live in areas being besieged by Syrian Government forces.

Now, terrorist groups like ISIL have committed horrific abuses against Syrians, and we must be absolutely adamant and united in our condemnation of those horrors, which are on the rise. We condemn in the strongest possible terms ISIL's attacks of 23 February on Assyrian Christian villages in the northeast Syrian province of Al Hasakah, where they kidnapped hundreds of civilians, including women, children and older persons, and we join others in demanding the immediate and unconditional release of these civilians, together with all of ISIL's hostages.

In December, four mass graves were discovered in Deir ez-Zor, containing the bodies of some of the hundreds of people abducted by ISIL months before. ISIL has also established what they call "cub camps", where they indoctrinate kids, teaching them how to use weapons and to carry out suicide attacks.

At the same time we condemn ISIL and unite to confront them, we must remember that the rise of these violent extremist groups in Syria would not have happened without the atrocities perpetrated by the Al-Assad regime. And the regime's ongoing atrocities continue to be the extremists' best recruiting tool. So any plan that would ally the international community with Al-Assad to confront these violent extremist groups would be completely counterproductive, as it would further fuel ISIL's rise.

There is only one way out of this horrific crisis, and that is through a comprehensive political solution. To that end, the United States again joins others in commending the efforts of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria, Staffan de Mistura, to halt — even for a limited time — the use of all aerial bombs and heavy artillery in Aleppo, whose civilians have suffered immensely amid fierce fighting. While it would be a welcome step if the Al-Assad regime were to fulfil the commitments it made to Mr. De Mistura to stop unilaterally its aerial bombardment in Aleppo and allow the unimpeded delivery of humanitarian assistance to civilians for six weeks, the regime has an abysmal track record on honouring its commitments. Indeed, these very commitments are supposed to have been implemented under resolutions adopted by this very Council. So what matters and what we must look to are the regime's actions.

In addition to marking a year since the adoption of resolution 2139 (2014), we also mark other terrible benchmarks today. On 15 March, we will enter the fifth year of the Syrian conflict. It has also been three years since plainclothes security officers raided the office of the Syrian Centre for Media and Freedom of Expression, a Damascus-based group dedicated to promoting freedom of expression, detaining 14 staff members. Many of those detained were tortured, according to staff members who were later released. Among those detained was the group's director, Mazen Darwish, who was charged with so-called crimes such as publishing human rights reports and documenting the names of people tortured, disappeared or killed during the conflict.

Mazen is still behind bars today, despite a General Assembly resolution adopted in May 2014 (resolution 67/262) that included a demand for his immediate release. Writing from jail last year, Mazen said,

> "There is not a single prison in Syria today without one of my friends inside it, nor is there a cemetery in Syria today that doesn't contain the remains of one of them."

There is a risk, in our regular meetings on Syria, to get used to the fact that the numbers of individuals detained and killed and disappeared and displaced and denied food — among so many other measures of human suffering — continue to rise. Indeed, there is a perverse dynamic whereby, as those numbers continue to rise, our sensitivity falls. Our nerve endings harden, and a sense of inevitability takes hold.

We must not let that happen. We must remember that each of those rising numbers and each one of those millions stands for another person. We must return to the commitments the Council has made, such as those in past resolutions to "take further measures" "in the

case of non-compliance" (resolution 2165 (2014)) and to hold accountable those responsible for violations and abuses.

The Council's impact will increase only if member States' positions change, and that will happen only if we recognize that there are children just like our own, starving in Yarmouk, and mothers just like our own who die in childbirth in Aleppo, because medical supplies have been stolen off United Nations trucks, or mothers who feel helpless in the face of their children's pleas for food. If that does not motivate us, literally nothing will.

Mr. Olguín Cigarroa (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): We appreciate the briefings by the Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Ms. Kyung-wha Kang, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr. António Guterres.

We did not want to say this, but in reading the report of the Secretary-General on the humanitarian situation in Syria (S/2015/124), we were struck by a sense of death, desolation and desperation. It is evidenced in the fact that, four years after the conflict's start, we have stopped counting those who die daily. Over 12 million people need humanitarian assistance. More than half of the Syrian population are displaced and 16 per cent of the population is outside of the country.

Chile strongly condemns the violence committed against the civilian population, regardless of where it originates, in particular the escalation of violence in Aleppo, Hama, Homs, Damascus and rural Damascus, among other areas. We deplore the use of any kind of weapon that does not distinguish between combatants and the civilian population, in particular the use of barrel bombs and the ongoing indiscriminate bombing and attacks with explosives, which have increased the number of dead, wounded and displaced by the conflict. The attacks and the capturing of individuals by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and their executions does nothing but exacerbate instability and insecurity for the Syrian population. All of those responsible should be held accountable before the law.

We believe it highly important that enhanced measures be taken to ensure that the parties cease to put up obstacles to aid delivery in areas that are out of their control and put an end their ongoing attacks on basic services and infrastructure. We stress the importance of an end being put to attacks on schools and other educational facilities. The displacement of children, in addition to denying them the right to education, increases the risk of them being marginalized in society, with the resulting well-known consequences. For that reason, we support the Secretary-General's observation in his report that there must be an urgent effort to rebuild the Syrian education system.

Chile urges the parties to unequivocally implement humanitarian resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014) and 2191 (2014) in order to prevent the delivery of humanitarian aid from being used as a weapon of war. We stress the pressing need to free the besieged areas, in which there are over 200,000 people, and ensure access for the population to medicine and medical supplies.

We take this opportunity to recognize the agencies, programmes and funds of the United Nations and their implementation partners for the tireless efforts that they undertake to deal with the tragic humanitarian crisis in Syria and the region in a climate that is very complex and marked by insecurity. Chile condemns the fact that less than a year after the unanimous adoption of resolution 2165 (2014), which ensures the protection and security of humanitarian workers, there are endless ongoing attacks against them.

In conclusion, we would like to reiterate that the humanitarian crisis can only be overcome if we can reach an inclusive political solution to the crisis, and therefore we should continue to encourage the search for such a solution. We value the initiatives taken at the meetings held in Cairo and Moscow, mentioned by the Secretary-General in his report, which constitute a first step. We hope that they can be complemented by the holding of other dialogue exercises on the basis of the Geneva communiqué. We reiterate our support to the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Mr. Staffan de Mistura, in carrying out that task.

Mr. Haniff (Malaysia): We wish to thank the Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for their briefings.

Malaysia remains deeply concerned about the dire, ongoing and deteriorating humanitarian situation in Syria. The parties to the conflict keep upping the ante in a desperate attempt to defeat the other, seemingly oblivious to the gruesome toll of death, mayhem and destruction that they are inflicting on the Syrian people in the very country that they claim to be fighting for.

We commend the United Nations humanitarian agencies and their partners for their commitment and dedication to delivering humanitarian assistance to

the Syrian people despite facing numerous challenges. While we commend the cooperation by the parties to the conflict in facilitating and allowing humanitarian access to reach those in need, we are concerned that administrative and bureaucratic hurdles, such as delays in responding to requests for humanitarian access and restrictions on the prohibitions of surgical and other medical supplies, remain in place. Those obstacles are definitely not helpful to the international community's efforts to alleviate the already worsening humanitarian situation and ease the suffering of the Syrian people on the ground. We call on the Syrian Government to further facilitate the movement of humanitarian supplies, especially to hard-to-reach areas. All parties to the conflict must commit to implementing resolutions 2139 (2014) and 2165 (2014). They must not be allowed to thwart the objectives of those resolutions.

We commend the State of Kuwait for hosting the third international humanitarian pledging conference, which will be held on 31 March 2015. Malaysia looks forward to its participation at the third conference to demonstrate our solidarity with the Syrian people. We are hopeful that the conference will help meet some of the funding gaps of the 2015 Syria response plan.

We thank the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic for the recent release of its ninth report (A/HRC/28/69). We are deeply appalled at the continued violations of international humanitarian and human rights law and atrocities perpetrated by all sides to the conflict in Syria. In this regard, we appreciate the victim-oriented approach that has been adopted in the investigating reports on allegations of human rights abuses and violations in Syria. However, we regret that the Commission until today has not been able to enter the country to enable it to fulfil its mandate more effectively.

The inhumane atrocities and reign of terror of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in the areas under its control has worsened the already grave human rights and humanitarian situation in Syria. Malaysia strongly condemns the recent abduction and killing of more than a hundred Assyrians by ISIL on 23 February 2015 in north-eastern Syria. Such atrocities once again demonstrate the brutality, intolerance and extremist ideology of ISIL against people of all faiths, ethnicities and nationalities. Malaysia strongly holds the view that the perpetrators of all grave violations and atrocities who have until now enjoyed impunity cannot go unpunished; they must be brought to justice to be held accountable.

Malaysia supports the efforts made by Mr. Staffan de Mistura, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria, to seek a comprehensive political solution for the Syrian crisis based on the Geneva communiqué. We applaud Mr. De Mistura's continued efforts with the relevant parties regarding the proposed freeze arrangements. We are extremely hopeful that the parties to the conflict will ensure the operationalization of the Aleppo "freeze" proposal. The conflicting parties should view it as a confidence-building measure to facilitate humanitarian operations and as an opportunity to restart dialogue and a political process.

Malaysia reiterates its view that there can be no military solution to the Syrian conflict. Malaysia firmly believes that the future of Syria should be determined by the Syrian people themselves through a Syrian-led political process. The international community should continue to support, promote, encourage and facilitate an inclusive political transition process and maintain efforts to foster national reconciliation in Syria. In this regard, Malaysia welcomes and supports all diplomatic initiatives, such as the Moscow and Cairo initiatives, to try to restart political dialogue between the conflicting parties. We further call on parties with influence to continue their efforts to encourage the conflicting parties to seek a political and peaceful resolution.

Nevertheless, we firmly believe that there must be a willingness on the part of the parties to the conflict themselves to find a political solution to it. The international community can only do so much. The international community's efforts will be meaningless and in vain without the conscious efforts and sincerity of the parties to end the conflict and seek a peaceful and political solution.

Mr. Ramírez Carreño (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): We wish to thank the President for this meeting on the Syrian Arab Republic on the implementation of resolution 2139 (2014) on humanitarian assistance. We also wish to thank the High Commissioner of the United Nations for Refugees, Mr. António Guterres, and the Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, Ms. Kyung-wha Kang.

In addressing the dramatic humanitarian situation in Syria, we have to speak with clarity before the international community. We cannot address this problem without failing to refer to the causes that led to the armed conflict and the devastating effect that the conflict has on the country, in particular on the

civilian population, which has been victim of violence. In violation of international law, foreign powers have backed — financially and otherwise — armed groups and terrorists in order to promote through violence the toppling of the legitimate regime in Syria, ignoring the country's right to self-determination. Such illegal actions have also endangered the unity, territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence of Syria.

Venezuela rejects war, human rights violations and atrocities that arise as a result of religious, political and ethnic intolerance. We are indignant about and lament the fact that other countries are intervening, which has led to political and military instability in the region and brought so much suffering to the people, triggering barbarities that threaten human beings. The financing of the war has led to an escalation in the crisis aimed at toppling the Government of President Bashar Al-Assad. Weapons and military capacity have been given to terrorist groups that today are expanding their barbaric acts and have destroyed the country.

The existence of terrorist groups is not just a problem in Syria. The expansion of their actions currently affects neighbouring countries and threatens to broaden the their presence and control over other territories. That is why the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela wishes to reiterate that the only way to stop the humanitarian crisis hinges on a political solution to the conflict that is negotiated and inclusive. Accordingly, there should be an immediate ceasefire that helps to bring about a firm and lasting peace that ensures reconciliation in this sister Arab country.

We reiterate our commitment to the respect for the unity, independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Syria in step with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. We back the initiatives that are aimed at seeking peace in Syria. We therefore welcome the diplomatic efforts that have been deployed in Moscow and Cairo aimed at assisting the parties and finding a political solution to the conflict. We encourage ongoing diplomatic efforts through the holding of upcoming events. Further, our country wishes to express its most firm support for the actions undertaken by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Mr. Staffan de Mistura, who in his latest report showed optimism regarding peace and at the same time expressed that within the equation of this armed conflict the Al-Assad Government is part of the solution.

In that regard, our country supports the implementation of the mechanism on a freeze — the ceasefire in Aleppo — so as to contribute to alleviating the tragic humanitarian situation being experienced by the civilian population victimized by the armed conflict. We must build confidence among the parties and give peace a chance.

We have noted with concern the latest information on the humanitarian situation in Syria. The Secretary-General's twelfth report (S/2015/124) paints a critical picture of the situation in Aleppo, Raqqa, Homs, Damascus and Al-Hasakeh, among other places. We are concerned about the humanitarian impact produced by the crisis in Syria, which is spilling over into neighbouring States.

Given the challenges that have arisen from this protracted conflict, we appreciate and wish to commend the work of the humanitarian agencies. We reject the idea of those agencies being the victims of violence and military targets. However, we view with concern the fact that the extraordinary force that the humanitarian agencies represent is being blocked by the actions of terrorist organizations operating in Syria, which, as stated in the report, are stealing humanitarian assistance from multilateral agencies such as the World Food Programme for reasons of propaganda. There is a need for strict adherence to the guiding principles of the United Nations regarding the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the Syrian people. All humanitarian assistance must be coordinated with the Syrian Government, and it is imperative that such assistance not reach terrorist groups.

We view with concern the displacement of millions of civilians as a result of the war. Venezuela therefore appreciates the solidarity of the neighbouring countries that are providing assistance in their own territories to Syrian refugees. The complex humanitarian situation affecting the Syrian civilian population requires a sustained effort from the international community in terms of ensuring the financial resources necessary to mitigate the shortfalls in food, medicine and other basic services that have arisen because of the armed conflict. Funds are not currently sufficient to address the crisis, and we therefore call on the donor community to fulfil its pledges to contribute to such efforts.

We condemn the deliberate attacks carried out against civilians and humanitarian personnel, as well as the terrorist acts in Syria, regardless of the perpetrators. We call on the parties to fully observe

the norms and principles of international humanitarian law on the protection of civilians in time of conflict, pursuant to the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949. We also condemn the recruitment of children and the separation of families by armed groups in Syria. We demand that these actors put an end to such practices, which represent flagrant violations of international law, in particular of the relevant legal instruments.

Lastly, we reiterate that overcoming the humanitarian problems that have arisen because of the war and that are causing suffering to the civilian population in Syria will necessarily involve an inclusive dialogue, without any conditions, and a negotiated political solution to the conflict. The parties' commitment to achieving peace and stability in the country without foreign interference is essential. The international community must support all diplomatic efforts to that end.

Mr. Safronkov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank Ms. Kang and Mr. Guterres for their comprehensive briefings. We listened carefully to the information provided by our Security Council colleagues. We are grateful to the humanitarian workers and agencies who are working under fire in Syria, risking their lives in an attempt to alleviate suffering. We understand the heavy burden that neighbouring States are bearing with the overflow of Syrian refugees into their countries.

It is clear to all that the difficulties encountered at present by Syrian civilians in terms of access to urgent humanitarian assistance are due to the complex security situation, especially the activity of terrorist groups. We are especially alarmed by the situation of people in the governorates of Raqqa and Deir ez-Zor, which are controlled by the so-called Islamic State. We would say that in those areas 600,000 people in need are deprived of access to humanitarian assistance. The situation has worsened with the closing of humanitarian offices in Raqqa, which were providing medicines and medical supplies.

We were extremely disturbed to hear that Islamic State is stealing humanitarian assistance from United Nations agencies and then distributing it under its banner. We understand that we must try all possible legal means to deliver humanitarian assistance to civilians who are under the control of terrorists, while ensuring appropriate safeguards to prevent any more such blatant incidents.

Turning to the most recent report of the Secretary-General on the humanitarian situation in Syria (S/2-15/124), we would like to call for an appropriate assessment of the terrorists and their actions. It is unacceptable refer to entities that are on Security Council sanctions lists, including the Al-Nusra Front and the Islamic State, as "the opposition". It is categorically unacceptable and politically incorrect. It cannot happen again.

We continue to be shocked by the blatant and reprehensible actions of terrorists. Yesterday the Security Council unanimously and strongly condemned the Islamic State's kidnapping of more than 100 Christians in north-eastern Syria. The terrorists are blocking humanitarian deliveries into Yarmouk refugee camp. Also unacceptable are the crimes being committed by other groups fighting against the Government, which are intentionally firing on residential areas of Syrian towns using mortars and highly destructive weapons. In the past month, such bombings have killed 1,440 people, including children, and wounded more than 200.

We call on both parties to the Syrian conflict — the Syrian Government and the opposition — to comply with Security Council resolutions and to observe international humanitarian law. We share the concern of the Security Council regarding the state of the educational system in Syria. It would be desirable for United Nations agencies, which are doing a great deal to alleviate the humanitarian situation, to become actively involved in the process of rebuilding schools and post-secondary institutions for teacher training. This is very important for the cities to which refugees and internally displaced persons are returning, including Homs and Ayn al-Arab.

We call on United Nations agencies to support constructive cooperation with the Syrian authorities. We are convinced that this is one of the major preconditions for constructive humanitarian engagement and assistance. We also encourage the Syrian Government to be in close contact with United Nations humanitarian agencies.

In conclusion, we agree with the view of the Secretary-General that the solution to the Syrian conflict can be neither military nor humanitarian but must be political. That is what the Russian Federation has been working towards since the beginning of the crisis, together with the Syrians, in the framework of an inter-Syrian dialogue based on the Geneva communiqué (S/2012/522, annex). This is our goal in the context of the extremely complex efforts under way

with the parties and the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Mr. Staffan de Mistura. We expect the Syrian Government and the Syrian opposition to go the extra mile to ensure the success of the efforts of the Special Envoy and thereby take the first steps towards the restoration of peace in the Syrian Arab Republic.

Mr. Laro (Nigeria): I wish to thank our briefers for their presentations and commend them for their effective leadership in the ongoing multidimensional effort to address the humanitarian situation in Syria.

According to the latest report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/124), various factors have exacerbated the humanitarian situation in Syria. The ongoing conflict, administrative hurdles, inadequate funding and the impact of the winter season have in various ways made it more difficult to render assistance to people in desperate need.

Despite these challenges, the United Nations and its partners have succeeded in delivering food, non-food items, water and medical supplies to fairly large numbers of people using shipments from Turkey and Jordan. We would like to express our appreciation to the Governments of Turkey and Jordan for their sustained support to the United Nations monitoring mechanism.

Nigeria acknowledges the support of the Syrian authorities, at the national and local levels, to the humanitarian effort. However, we would like to appeal for more expeditious approval of aid shipments in order to help the United Nations and its partners consolidate the successes they have achieved so far in dealing with the humanitarian situation in Syria. Nigeria strongly urges all parties to refrain from blocking supplies to areas outside their control. They should also cease restricting humanitarian access within the areas they do control, since such restriction is clearly an infringement of humanitarian law. All sides must respect humanitarian principles and ensure the well-being of civilians, especially women and children, in areas under their control.

Nigeria acknowledges with profound appreciation the tremendous sacrifices that have been made by Jordan, Turkey, Lebanon and the other countries hosting Syrian refugees. We pay tribute to the humanitarian workers operating in challenging circumstances on the ground in Syria. We urge donors to scale up their support for the Syrian humanitarian effort. As various speakers have emphasized this afternoon, the only sustainable solution to the humanitarian crisis in Syria lies in a peaceful resolution to the conflict. Unless and until that is achieved, the difficult humanitarian situation in the country will very likely persist. We therefore encourage all parties to cooperate with Special Envoy de Mistura and embrace a dialogue, with a view to reaching a negotiated solution to the conflict.

Ms. Jakubonė (Lithuania): I would like to thank Ms. Kyung-wha Kang, Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees António Guterres for their comprehensive briefings.

We are facing the world's largest humanitarian crisis, one that is having a grave impact on international peace and security. Trapped civilians, refugees and internally displaced people are desperately waiting for the end of the senseless bloodshed in Syria. The numbers speak for themselves. Since the conflict began, 200,000 people have been killed; 12.2 million, half of them children, are in immediate humanitarian need and 3.8 million are refugees. Thousands of civilians have fled their homes, seeking refuge wherever they can, some of them risking their lives to cross the Mediterranean, some finding themselves locked into the war zone in no-man's land. The host countries, Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt, have been generous to the Syrian refugees. To cope with that extraordinary challenge, they need more aid and development assistance.

Resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014) and 2191 (2014) have outlined key obligations under international humanitarian law that should be unconditionally respected by all parties at all times. Nothing has been done so far. On the contrary, indiscriminate aerial bombings, including Al-Assad's barrel bombs, shelling by the armed opposition and killings by terrorists and extremists continue every day. We are witnessing the deliberate refusal of the Al-Assad regime to carry out its primary responsibility for protecting its civilian population.

No one is immune in today's Syria. Hundreds of medical personnel and humanitarian workers are being killed. Schools are attacked, ransacked and destroyed. Journalists and activists documenting violations and abuses of human rights disappear and are detained, tortured and killed. War crimes and crimes against humanity have been committed by the Al-Assad regime as well as the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and other terrorist and extremist groups, for which enormous amounts of evidence have been documented by the

Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Syria. We condemn unreservedly the widespread and systematic violations of international human-rights and humanitarian law and the gruesome abuses and violations of human rights that have been perpetrated by all parties to the Syrian conflict.

We greatly value the work of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and of other United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations. Violence and insecurity, shifting conflict lines, deliberate interference with and closing of operations, obstructive administrative procedures and financial shortfalls continue to constrain humanitarian access and timely and efficient humanitarian aid across Syria. The 2015 humanitarian appeal for Syria has increased twelve-fold since the beginning of the crisis. Yet only little bits of humanitarian assistance reach those in need, in amounts that are far from enough to help those suffering in a sustained way. But we must continue. It is our human and moral obligation to help those in desperate need. In that regard, we sincerely welcome the upcoming third pledging conference for Syria to be held in Kuwait.

There is neither a military nor a humanitarian solution to this crisis. A political settlement must be found. The Council should do way more to push for a genuine and sustainable political solution, based on the Geneva communiqué (S/2012/522, annex) and inclusively addressing the aspirations and grievances of all Syrians. We support the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Mr. Staffan de Mistura, in his efforts to reduce violence, as a stepping stone towards an ultimately genuinely Syrian-led political process. All parties to the conflict must fully comply with the relevant resolutions without further delay. We fully support the Secretary-General's call for the siege of 212,000 people to be immediately lifted, access for medical and surgical supplies to all parts of the country ensured, the practice of using denial of key services as a weapon of war ended, Syria's education system rebuilt and the use of barrel bombs prohibited.

Lastly, the Council must live up to its stated intention to take further measures in the event of continued non-compliance. There can be no impunity for crimes committed, and their perpetrators must be brought to justice. The role of the International Criminal Court should not be forgotten, although the Council's inaction in May created a licence for all perpetrators to kill, torture and rape again. Justice and accountability are prerequisites for a lasting peace in Syria for all Syrians.

Sir Mark Lyall Grant (United Kingdom): I would like to thank High Commissioner Guterres and Assistant Secretary-General Kang for their briefings and for the remarkable work that both the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees are doing to alleviate the suffering of the Syrian people. I welcome the fact that we are holding today's meeting in an open format. It is vital that our horror at the scale of the humanitarian crisis in Syria and its neighbours, and our condemnation of Al-Assad and his brutal regime, be heard loudly and clearly outside this Chamber.

Next month will see the start of the fifth year of the conflict in Syria. More than 220,000 people are dead and 12.2 million reliant on humanitarian assistance. Almost half of the Syrian population is displaced; 7.6 million people have fled their homes within Syria and 3.8 million have taken refuge in neighbouring countries, causing massive security, economic and social challenges for all of Syria's neighbours, particularly Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey. Those statistics have been heard many times in the Council, but we have failed to take the action necessary to put an end to this terrible conflict. Al-Assad's regime bears direct responsibility for the situation.

Some Member States claim that terrorism lies at the heart of the conflict, but the Chair of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Syria was quite clear on that point last week when he said that terrorism was not the cause of the conflict but a consequence of it. Al-Assad's regime continues to target civilians and use barrel bombs and chemical weapons indiscriminately. He continues to abuse those held in detention, recruit child soldiers, deny civilians access to essential medical supplies and collectively punish them through the denial of essential services such as water and electricity. That has created an environment that has spawned terrorist organizations such as the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). Al-Assad's actions, and others reported by the Commission of Inquiry, represent clear violations of international humanitarian law and human rights, and amount to crimes against humanity.

As Assistant Secretary-General Kang has reminded us, we must end the shameful culture of impunity in Syria, and hold the perpetrators of those crimes to account. Nor should we ignore the heinous acts

perpetrated by ISIL and other extremist groups, which include sexual violence, kidnappings and torture. It is manifestly obvious that the situation in Syria should be referred to the International Criminal Court.

A negotiated political transition based on the 2012 Geneva communiqué (S/2012/522, annex) is the only sustainable way to end the horror. We welcome the efforts of the United Nations Special Envoy for Syria to establish a freeze in aerial and heavy artillery attacks in Aleppo, which may be a first step to a broader political process. We encourage Mr. De Mistura to work with both the regime and the moderate opposition in the development of that proposal. Experience shows, however, that we should not take the regime's promises at face value. In particular, we must do all we can to avoid a tragedy such as that which took place in Homs.

The Syrian regime must allow greater humanitarian access to besieged areas. More than 200,000 people now live their lives under siege, and 80 per cent of those people are besieged by regime forces. Another 4.8 million people remain in dangerous and hard-to-reach areas. Last year, the United Nations submitted twice as many requests for cross-line aid convoys than in 2013, and yet reached less than half as many people. A year after the adoption of resolution 2139 (2014), that is wholly unacceptable. We must preserve the few gains we have made with regard to cross-border access and be resolute in applying pressure on the Al-Assad regime to grant access to other areas. I call on all Council and non-Council members to join our efforts in that regard.

We have been able to make a difference where we do have access. It has been over a year since the last reported polio case, and international assistance has averted starvation and mass malnutrition. However, funding is not keeping up with the needs on the ground. The needs of the Syrian people are growing at more than six times the rate of funding. The 2015 United Nations appeals for Syria and the region now stand at $8.4 billion, 40 per cent higher than last year. Kuwait has shown great leadership in agreeing to host a third international pledging conference for the Syrian crisis next month. We must match its leadership by pledging the support needed to meet the growing crisis. Hundreds of thousands of lives are at stake.

The United Kingdom is determined to play its role. During her recent visit to Jordan, the Secretary of State for International Development announced a further $154 million of funding, bringing the United Kingdom's assistance for Syria's humanitarian relief to $1.2 billion. That includes $145 million to provide education, protection and trauma care for children affected by the crisis, and to help prevent a lost generation of Syrians. I call on all Members of the United Nations to do their part and pledge further funding at the Kuwait conference.

Let me conclude by again thanking the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr. Guterres, and Assistant-Secretary General Kang for their briefings. Their input and the input from experts on the ground are very useful for Council members. We should be open to other such briefings, including from the International Committee of the Red Cross and Syrian activists, in future months.

Mr. Gaspar Martins (Angola): I would like to start by thanking Ms. Kyung-wha Kang and Mr. António Guterres for their very comprehensive briefings about the humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, and also for their tireless efforts to ease the suffering of the many civilians affected by this civil war. Angola highly commends the quality of their work and the efforts they are undertaking to bring the facts to the Security Council. They have done their job, and it is now up to the Council to deliberate, with the same amount of courage and objectivity, on the facts that have been presented to it.

As we were briefed, it is most unfortunate that the catastrophic humanitarian situation in Syria continues to deteriorate. This is a catastrophic humanitarian situation. The persistence of heavy fighting and the complete disregard for international humanitarian law have put a very burden on the civilian population, which continues to leave and experience tragic circumstances, including death, sickness, famine and displacment, while the international community remains unable to find ways to successfully mediate a peaceful solution to the conflict. Furthermore, due to political differences, the international community is unable to make a more meaningful contribution to put an end to the suffering of the women, children and peace-loving Syrians.

The staggering numbers of internationally displaced Syrians and refugees in neighbouring countries attest to the dimension of the humanitarian catastrophe that has struck the Syrian people. In fact, the civilian population is the main victim of this savage war. Rape and sexual violence, enforced disappearance, forced displacement, the recruitment of child soldiers and

summary executions happen on a daily basis. Human rights abuses are being perpetrated by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham and other terrorist groups, whose rapid advance across large areas of the Syrian territory adds an additional element of concern. Such concern is not only due to its severe impact on the civilian population of Syria, but also due to their rapid spread into most of the Middle East, North Africa and beyond. Those terrorists must be stopped and, ultimately, defeated.

It is most unfortunate that the parties to the Syrian conflict continue to pursue a military solution while showing no commitment to a peaceful settlement with a view to arriving at the inclusive politial solution that we have been advocating for some time. It is of the utmost importance that the international community continue to exert pressure by urging all the parties concerned to be fully aware of the magnitude of the humanitarian crisis and to ensure that relief agencies are allowed to provide the necessary assistance to the civilians in need.

With approximately 12 million people lacking basic humanitarian assistance, the protection of civilians is an absolute priority. Treating and evacuating the wounded and providing food, water, sanitation and hygiene, health care and shelter are some of the most basic and urgent tasks that humanitarian agencies must be allowed to perform without interference or obstruction. It is indeed hard to imagine that more than 3 million Syrian citizens were forced to become refugees in neighbouring countries. Those countries, in particular Lebanon, are approaching a dangerous saturation point, with more than 1 million refugees in need of shelter and other basic needs. The situation is just as dire in Iraq, Jordan and Turkey, with the Governments increasingly unable to provide basic needs, including health care, to such large numbers of refugees. Angola pledges its solidarity with Syria's neighbouring countries. We look forward to the success of the third international pledging conference, to be hosted by Kuwait.

In conclusion, may I reiterate Angola's strong commitment to contributing to finding a political solution to this conflict, which must be based on the Geneva communiqué (S/2012/522, annex). We commend the work being undertaken by Mr. Staffan de Mistura, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria, and encourage his efforts to build bridges between the opposing sides. We also encourage the diplomatic initiatives that have been undertaken, including the Moscow and Cairo initiatives, aimed at restarting the political dialogue among the parties to the conflict.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of China.

I thank Ms. Kyung-wha Kang, Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, and Mr. António Guterres, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, for their briefings.

The Syrian conflict will soon enter its fifth year. This protracted conflict has devastated the ancient and beautiful nation of Syria, traumatized its people, spread terrorism and placed enormous economic and social pressures on Syria's neighbours. In this grave situation, the parties in Syria, the international community, the United Nations and humanitarian agencies must take terrible risks and overcome great difficulties in delivering humanitarian assistance in Syria and its neighbours, and have contributed significantly to alleviating the humanitarian crisis. China highly appreciates their work.

In the meantime, humanitarian efforts in Syria are still confronted by a variety of challenges, including ongoing conflict, rampant terrorism, blocked channels of communication and grave shortfalls in funding. If the relevant resolutions of the Security Council are to be fully implemented and the humanitarian situation in Syria is to be tangibly improved, the parties should, out of their own sense of humanity, assume their respective responsibilities, strengthen their coordination and focus on the following aspects in the next phase.

First, we must vigorously promote the political process to resolve the Syrian issue. That is the only way to restore peace and stability in Syria and improve the humanitarian situation. China appreciates and supports the mediation efforts of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria, Mr. Staffan de Mistura, to promote the freeze initiative. We also support the efforts of Russia and Egypt to promote the political process. The international community, and the Security Council in particular, should support the political mediation efforts of the relevant parties and urge the Syrian Government and the opposition to find a solution as soon as possible that is appropriate to national conditions and accommodates the interests of all parties.

Secondly, the parties in Syria, the international community, the United Nations and other humanitarian

agencies should fully and comprehensively implement resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014) and 2191 (2014). The Syrian Government should bear the primary responsibility for protecting civilians. The Syrian opposition should, alongside the Syrian Government, take measures to protect civilians and support efforts to deliver international humanitarian assistance. Organizations such as the United Nations should follow the United Nations guiding principles for humanitarian assistance and strengthen communications with the Syrian Government to win cooperation and support. The international community should provide constructive assistance on the basis of respect for Syria's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, and avoid politicizing humanitarian questions and militarizing humanitarian assistance.

Thirdly, close attention should be paid to the exacerbation by terrorists of the humanitarian situation. Terrorist organizations inside Syria kill civilians brutally, thereby exacerbating the humanitarian crisis and undermining humanitarian efforts. This has become the principal cause of the deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Syria. China is firmly opposed to all forms of terrorism and condemns all violence against innocent civilians. The international community should fully implement resolutions 2170 2014), 2178 (2014) and 2199 (2015), on curbing and combatting terrorism. In that regard, counter-terrorism and humanitarian assistance needs should be well balanced and we must develop a comprehensive strategy to ensure that our goals are aligned and mutually reinforcing, and that no civilians are harmed.

Fourthly, the international community should strengthen its support for United Nations humanitarian assistance efforts. China appreciates the fact that Kuwait and the United Nations will jointly host a pledging conference. We call on the international community to actively contribute to the United Nations Syria strategic response plan for 2015 and to regional refugee and reconstruction programmes so as to alleviate funding shortfalls and ease the pressure on Syria's neighbours caused by the refugee problem.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I give the floor to the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Mr. Ja'afari (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, allow me to pay tribute to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and to the Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs. I thank them for their briefings on the humanitarian situation in my country, Syria. I would also like to thank the presidency for issuing a press statement (SC/11799) this morning condemning the fact that terrorists of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) have kidnapped more than 100 Christian Assyrians from their villages in Al-Hasakeh governorate. I would also like to thank all the speakers who sympathized with the humanitarian suffering being experienced by large segments of the Syrian population as a consequence of the persistence of the crisis. I would like to start with a few preliminary comments.

A year ago the Security Council adopted resolution 2139 (2014), which condemns the destruction of the cultural heritage in Iraq and Syria by ISIS and the Al-Nusra Front. Since some Member States are not serious about fighting ISIS and theAl-Nusra Front by way of this resolution, ISIS terrorists demolished the Mosul Museum today, and sold 100 pieces of cultural heritage in London in an auction sale a few days ago.

Despite all that, we are still hearing some speakers ignoring the errors in the policies of their Governments towards my countries. They insist on blackmailing the Syrian population and the international community's opinion by repeatedly saying, as we heard only minutes ago, that as long as President Al-Assad stays in office, ISIS and the Al-Nusra Front will remain strong. Such a serious assertion reveals the identity of those who are supporting ISIS and the Al-Nusra Front in Syria, Iraq, Egypt, Libya and Lebanon. It also shows why a terrorist, such as ISIS and the Al-Nusra Front are still in the region, and it illustrates the facat that they are not truly fighting those two terrorist organizations.

I also heard a colleague say that our air force is targeting terrorists with what she called barrel bombs. Regardless of the fact that there is nothing called a barrel bomb in military terminology, it is worth noting that the air force of that colleague has been targeting terrorists with cruise missiles, smart bombs and other highly destructive weapons. Why is her country allowed to target terrorists in other countries' territories while our air force is not allowed to target the same terrorists on our own territory? And why is it that a terrorist we are targeting on our land becomes an innocent civilian on whom we are dropping barrel bombs?

A year has now passed since the adoption of resolution 2139 (2014) and it has been more than

seven months since the adoption of resolution 2165 (2014) seeking to deal with the humanitarian situation in Syria. Nonetheless, the humanitarian situation continues to deteriorate in some regions, begging the question, "Why?" To answer this question, we need a serious assessment of how we have been dealing with this important humanitarian dossier. We also need to define the standards that should govern our working mechanisms in order to duly contribute to alleviating the humanitarian suffering of the Syrian population. To this end, we have to start diagnosing the root causes of the problem. Secondly, we have to determine the goals we seek to achieve. Thirdly, we must adopt the legal grounds on the basis of which we will be working. Fourthly, and finally, we must set out the mechanisms governing our work. I would like to detail each of these points separately.

First of all, let me address how to diagnose the root causes. It is high time for some parties, after a long period of denial, to recognize that the root cause of the humanitarian crisis in several areas of Syria is the result of the expansion of terrorism supported by foreign forces. If we follow the humanitarian crisis objectively, it can be seen that the crisis, including the refugee and displaced person crises, has arisen only in the areas controlled armed terrorist groups. The best example is what happened in the city of Aleppo, which maintained its stability and prosperity for more than a year and a half after the onset of the crisis, without any problems, until some countries decided to ask their terrorist groups, which are multinational and trans-border in nature, to enter that city and take civilians as human shields.

We have to agree that any measure will fall short of alleviating the human suffering of the Syrians in need as long as the relevant Security Council resolutions are not implemented, especially resolutions 2170 (2014), 2178 (2014) and 2199 (2014), in collaboration and coordination with the Syrian Government. In other words, we have to put an end to the practices of the Turkish-Qatari-Israeli-Saudi terrorist alliance that is supporting, funding and arming ISIS, the Al-Nusra front, the Free Syrian Army and the other terrorist groups that are embracing the ideology and practices of Al-Qaida.

This was reaffirmed recently by the American General Wesley Clark, the former Supreme Commander of NATO, when he said that ISIS was the product of the funding of close friends and allies of the United States. We cannot speak about improving the humanitarian situation while weapons and training are still being provided to terrorists under the slogan of "moderate Opposition". The former American Ambassador to Syria recently recognized that this so-called moderate Opposition is collaborating with the Al-Nusra Front and defending it.

Secondly, we must determine the goal we are seeking to achieve. Here we need to answer the following questions: Is the goal to improve the humanitarian situation in Syria or is it for some to exploit the suffering of the Syrian people as a means of pressuring the Syrian Government? If we agree that the objective is indeed to improve the humanitarian situation, we should do the following. First, we should deal with the terrorist phenomenon as I explained previously. Secondly, we need the immediate lifting of the unilateral compulsory measures that have been imposed against the Syrian people by some countries, including members of the Security Council, that claim to defend the Syrian people. I would like to note that the European Union, for instance, has imposed sanctions prohibiting the provision of fuel to civilian aircraft, as well as sanctions against the Ministers for Relief, Electricity and National Reconciliation. Thirdly, we must refrain from politicizing humanitarian issues in Syria, including in the reports submitted by the Secretariat.

We have conveyed to the Council the comments of the Syrian Government on the report currently under discussion, but I would like to give just two examples of such politicization. The first example has to do with the allegations that the Syrian Government is besieging some regions and preventing access of humanitarian assistance to those regions. I would like to ask how it can be said that those areas are besieged while munitions are still finding their way to those regions from terrorist-supporting countries? Those weapons are then being used to launch indiscriminate missile attacks and undertake suicide bombings in Damascus, Aleppo, Homs, Dara'a and elsewhere, which had, as of 22 February, claimed the lives of 17,186 Syrian civilians, including 1,867 children.

Some report authors have come up with a new denomination to describe the terrorist groups. They have been calling them the "armed Syrian Opposition", ut we all know that the opposition in any given country cannot be anything other than a peaceful political opposition. As for the groups carrying weapons outside of State authority, recruiting thousands of foreign terrorist fighters and destroying, killing and wreaking

havoc, these can only be called terrorist groups, according to the Security Council's own definition in this regard.

I would like to mention that there are far more than 212,000 people being besieged in Syria. The correct figure is 23 million Syrians. Some 23 million Syrians are being besieged by countries supporting terrorism and imposing sanctions against the Syrian people.

The second example concerns allegations that barrel bombs are being used and that seek to portray the Syrian Government as evil. The Syrian army is fighting terrorism and protecting civilians in line with international law while taking great care to spare the lives of civilians living in the regions under terrorist threat. Our army is totally committed to the safety of those civilians, which has prevented us in many instances from uprooting those terrorists.

Thirdly, we need to define the legal grounds on which humanitarian assistance is to be provided. Here we need to agree that it is necessary to work according to United Nations guidelines for the provision of humanitarian assistance in emergencies, as per General Assembly resolution 182/46, especially with respect to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States.

Fourthly, let me turn to the mechanisms governing our methods of work. Given the shortfalls in the provision of humanitarian assistance, we need to undertake the following actions in order to avoid such shortfalls in future. We need first to reinforce the coordination and collaboration with the Syrian Government in order to guarantee access for humanitarian assistance for those who truly need it, by which I mean the civilians in the various Syrian regions without discrimination. We must make sure that humanitarian assistance does not fall into the hands of terrorist groups. We know that early this month ISIS seized assistance sent by the World Food Programme through Turkey.

Furthermore, we have to make sure that the humanitarian assistance is provided from within Syrian territory. While assistance was provided within Syrian territory to some 3.4 million beneficiaries in January 2015 alone thanks to the efforts and collaboration of the Syrian Government and thousands of volunteers from the Red Crescent, we have witnessed the limited number of beneficiaries of assistance channelled across the borders, only 5 per cent of whom were reached. This proves that the measures adopted by the United Nations and implementing resolutions 2165 (2014) and 2191 (2014) were not effective. Moreover, some have insisted on dispatching humanitarian assistance across the borders to implement a hidden agenda and achieve their goals through so-called humanitarian corridors, well aware that Turkey and Saudi Arabia are exploiting those resolutions by sending weapons and terrorists from Turkey or Jordan through the same corridors used by the United Nations.

Thirdly, there is a serious funding shortfall. At a time when the Syrian Government is responsible for delivering the majority of the humanitarian assistance being distributed in Syria, the humanitarian plan was funded at only 48 per cent in 2014, whereas the funding for terrorist attacks in Syria was at 100 per cent or more, thanks to the generous contributions of Qatar, Turkey and Saudi Arabia.

I take the opportunity offered by Mr. Guterres' presence here today to discuss the issue of Syrian refugees. I have already said that the crimes committed by the armed terrorist groups have forced Syrians to leave their homes in some regions and to become internally displaced persons or refugees in camps in neighbouring countries, where they are used to leverage political pressure and justify intervention and as pretexts for requests for financial assistance. Adding insult to injury, some of these camps are being used to train terrorists and recruit children who will later be sent to Syria, as confirmed in several international reports. If the Security Council truly wishes to help Syrian refugees, it must first help them return to Syria, in cooperation with the Syrian Government, which has repeatedly reiterated its readiness to provide for all their basic needs, including shelter, until they can return to the homes they fled.

In conclusion, I reiterate that the Syrian crisis can be resolved only through a peaceful, political settlement based on the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, international law and the Charter of the United Nations. The settlement should also be based on intra-Syrian dialogue, under exclusively Syrian leadership and free from all forms of foreign interference in our internal affairs. We thank all those who are helping to alleviate the humanitarian suffering of our people with integrity and without hidden political agendas or manipulation of the grave situation.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Lebanon.

Mr. Salam (Lebanon): Four years into the conflict in Syria, the international community remains unable

to stop the collapse into bloodshed and chaos of a country with one of the most ancient societies and rich civilizations on our planet. That tragic cycle of violence has left more than 200,000 people dead, many more wounded, 6.5 million — if not more — internally displaced persons and over 3 million refugees in neighbouring countries, not to mention the magnitude of physical destruction.

For four years, the Council, which is the organ entrusted by the Charter of the United Nations with maintaining international peace and security, has failed to facilitate the realization of a political solution that would put an end to the protracted conflict. By failing to assume its role, the Security Council has not only failed in its mission and indeed failed Syria, but it has also failed its neighbours and allowed for a dangerous increase in regional instability, a situation well illustrated by the fact that the conflict has produced a massive humanitarian crisis and one of biggest waves of human displacement since the Second World War. That has pushed the societies, economies and infrastructure of neighbouring counties to the brink, not to mention the negative impact it has had on the security environment throughout the region and beyond. As members know, terrorism, fanaticism and sectarianism are on the rise, threatening the stability of neighbouring countries and international peace and security.

Lebanon today is home to more than 1.1 million registered Syrian refugees and 350,000 Palestinian refugees, including 45,000 Palestinian refugees from Syria. That is about a third of my country's total population. Lebanon is the smallest country of the region in terms of both geographic size and population, but it hosts the largest number of refugees. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Lebanon is the country hosting the highest number of refugees per capita. It ranks second in the total number of refugees, behind only Pakistan, whose geographical size and population are respectively approximately 80 and 50 times that of my country.

The economic impact of the Syrian crisis on Lebanon has been detrimental. The World Bank estimated the total losses to Lebanon's economy as a result of the crisis at about $7.5 billion, and that was in the summer of 2013. The total economic loss today is almost double that amount. Eighty-six per cent of Syrian refugees live in local communities, in regions that are home to 68 per cent of the poorest Lebanese. Poverty in the country has risen by 61 per cent, Lebanese unemployment levels have doubled, economic growth stumbled, and the national infrastructure for education, health, energy and water is stretched beyond its capacity. In response to the growing challenge of the refugee crisis, my Government, in coordination with the relevant United Nations agencies and other partners, adopted in December 2014 the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2015-2016, with an estimated cost of $2.1 billion.

Allow me to reiterate today what we have stressed on several previous occasions. Lebanon cannot cope by itself with the humanitarian rights and needs of Syrian refugees on its soil and continues therefore to call for real burden-sharing and greater assistance to host communities through official delivery channels.

Under the able leadership of Mr. Guterres, Ms. Amos and Ms. Kang, the United Nations agencies have done an excellent job of seeking to alleviate the suffering of the refugees. Once again, I would like to commend their work and that of all the members of their respective teams. The international community has also shown tremendous generosity in response to the humanitarian crisis. In particular, Kuwait ought to be commended for continuing to host the donors conferences. However, more — and in reality, much more — still needs to be done. In fact, only 52 per cent of the $1.7 billion estimated as needed under the regional response plan for Lebanon in 2014 was met.

It is of utmost urgency that the international community increase its humanitarian support to the Syrian refugees and to their host communities in neighbouring countries. But more importantly, there remains a need for the Council to live up to its duties in helping to bring about a political solution to the Syrian conflict. The reality is that, beyond the responsibilities of the Security Council as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, what is at stake today in Syria is our humanity.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Turkey.

Mr. Çevik (Turkey): At the outset, I would like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Kang and High Commissioner Guterres for their briefings. Turkey appreciates the tireless work of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to alleviate the suffering of the millions of displaced Syrians, as well as their advocacy in that regard.

I would like to share with the Security Council what Turkey has been doing in response to the Syrian

crisis. The humanitarian operations of the Turkish Government are carried out on three tracks. First, we maintain an open border policy and comply with the principle of non-refoulement. More than 1.6 million Syrians are now living in Turkey. More than 239,000 Syrians are registered in 25 shelters. All their needs, including food, non-food items, health and education services as well as psychological assistance, vocational training and social activities, are provided by the Turkish Government.

Secondly, to assist Syrians who live in various towns outside the shelters, we are taking measures to provide them with basic services, including free health care. In that respect, as a reflection of our strong commitment to humanitarian values and principles, the law on foreigners and international protection came into force in April 2014. Furthermore, the temporary protection regulation for Syrians came into force on 22 October 2014.

The third track pertains to extending humanitarian relief items to the northern parts of Syria. Turkey has continued to ensure that humanitarian relief reaches the northern parts of the country through the border's zero point, in conformity with its international obligations and in support of the United Nations campaign. The total value of the aid channelled to Syria through this type of operation is in the range of $365 million.

Lastly, as the Secretary-General's monthly reports have repeatedly stated, Turkey is also closely cooperating with the United Nations to enable the Organization's cross-border humanitarian operations to succeed in northern Syria.

As resolution 2191 (2014) and numerous monthly reports to the Council have suggested, the humanitarian needs in Syria remain enormous, and much more needs be done, especially in terms of scaling up cross-border and cross-line humanitarian assistance. Turkey will remain committed to continuing its contributions. However, we also need to be on the receiving side through burden sharing. The financial burden on the Government is currently almost $6 billion, whereas the total contributions we have received bilaterally and multilaterally so far stand at $300 million.

I must stress that the current situation is not sustainable, neither for Turkey nor for any other country in the region. Syria's neighbouring countries, including Turkey, have so far assumed an unfair share of the humanitarian burden of the Syrian crisis. They should not be left alone in coping with this humanitarian tragedy, which requires a genuine partnership among all members of the international community. That partnership has to include addressing the needs of Syrians who have been forcefully displaced, building the resilience of host communities and increasing resettlement efforts, while at the same time bearing in mind the future human resources needs of Syrian society for the sustainable development of post-conflict Syria.

We are gravely concerned by the continuing deterioration of the situation in Syria and increasingly feel the strain of the current state of chaos. Instability in the region — and the terrorist organization Daesh in particular — represents a threat to international peace and security. On this occasion, let me express our strongest condemnation on the recent abduction of Syrian Christians, as well as other barbaric acts committed by Daesh.

In that regard, the international community needs a comprehensive and coordinated strategy with political, security and humanitarian pillars. The international community has to make the crisis in Syria a shared priority and address the root causes of the problem in order to bring about a genuine political transition based on the Geneva communiqué (S/2012/522, annex) through the establishment of a transitional governing body with authority to exercise full executive powers. On 15 March we will mark the fifth year of this crisis. It is high time for the international community to act.

I will refrain from taking Council members' valuable time by responding to some of the accusations and statements made against us. As we have done in the past, we will continue to stand by the Syrian people in these difficult times.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.7395

Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7395th meeting

Friday, 27 February 2015, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Liu Jieyi	(China)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gimolieca
	Chad	Mr. Gombo
	Chile	Mr. Llanos
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Jordan	Mr. Hmoud
	Lithuania	Mr. Baublys
	Malaysia	Mrs. Adnin
	New Zealand	Mr. McLay
	Nigeria	Mr. Laro
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Spain	Mr. Fernández-Arias Minuesa
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Suárez Moreno

Agenda

Letter dated 28 February 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/136)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Letter dated 28 February 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/136)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Ambassador Heidi Tagliavini, Special Representative of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Chairperson-in-Office in Ukraine, and Ambassador Ertuğrul Apakan, Head of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome Ambassadors Tagliavini and Apakan, who are joining today's meeting via video-teleconference from Kyiv.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Tagliavini.

Ms. Tagliavini: I am asking for the Council's attention at a moment that may become a turning point in the Ukrainian conflict.

We indeed seemed to be standing at the brink of an all-out war in Ukraine just a few days ago. Today, we are actively engaged in de-escalation, which we hope may become an irreversible process. A sustainable ceasefire and a continued process of de-escalation, including the withdrawal of heavy military equipment, are in our opinion indispensable prerequisites to any further progress on the way towards a peaceful settlement. Let me repeat that unless the guns fall silent, there will be no hope for stabilizing the situation, let alone for peace.

When the first Minsk agreements were signed on 5 and 19 September last year, the toll in terms of human lives taken by the war already stood at around 3,500, with an even higher number of wounded. Five months later, when the implementation package was signed in Minsk on 12 February and the declaration of the four Heads of State and Government was agreed upon, the death toll was already close to 6,000, not to mention those missing in action. On top of these alarming figures of persons left dead by fighting and other violence, there are thousands more seriously wounded, there are vast areas of utter destruction, and — last but not least — there are more than 1 million internally displaced persons (IDPs), plus a significant number of refugees from the conflict area. It is a scene of all-out human tragedy, and we deeply deplore each of the victims.

These sad figures were further increased by a considerable number of dead and wounded when, in clear violation of the recent ceasefire, the rebel forces took the Ukrainian controlled city of Debaltseve after intense fighting, with much further bloodshed and destruction. In addition, in a parallel development to the Debaltseve fighting, access, monitoring and verification were repeatedly denied to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Special Monitoring Mission for several consecutive days.

Fortunately, in the most recent days, we have witnessed a significant reduction of hostilities, another release of detainees and, finally, the beginning of the withdrawal of heavy arms from the line of separation. These most recent developments are encouraging signs. We hope that this trend will prove to be sustainable and followed by further positive developments.

Where do we stand now? In our opinion, if the aforementioned most recent positive developments do not continue, we will be again in a negative spiral leading towards more dead, more destruction, more IDPs and refugees, and almost certainly towards an even more serious crisis, entailing the risk of a larger war. This we cannot accept.

We welcome the active engagement and continued involvement of Heads of State and Government, notably in the Normandy format, in order to stabilize the situation and work for a peaceful settlement. We know that we are still far away from this goal, but through the pattern that has been laid the road has been established. Against that background of agreements reached at the senior political level, it is the purpose of the Trilateral Contact Group to build bridges and to provide opportunities to implement these agreements and to work out peaceful solutions on the ground.

Should the ceasefire hold and de-escalation continue, the Trilateral Contact Group stands ready to take appropriate steps towards the full implementation of the Minsk agreements and the establishment of a proper monitoring and verification mechanism, in which the Special Monitoring Mission is to play a central

role. I thank my dear colleague and friend Ambassador Apakan for all the efforts he and his Mission are doing in that direction.

The Trilateral Contact Group is already in the process of developing a scenario for setting up working groups, as foreseen in the implementation package of February. It seems obvious to me that these working groups must focus first on the most important and most urgent issues. These are the security- and humanitarian-related parts of the package, which must benefit the people in need as quickly as possible, together with an inclusive political dialogue, as well as economic and social rehabilitation.

In my opinion, the delivery of humanitarian aid to the conflict area and its population, who are in dire need of almost every basic services and commodities required for daily life, should be one of our top priorities. We should be able to establish a mutually acceptable framework, including rules and procedures for these efforts. And it would be most helpful if we reached agreement among all sides to conduct a humanitarian needs assessment mission to the region, representing internationally recognized organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross and relevant United Nations bodies and other organizations. Such a mission may also lay the groundwork for the coordination of relief efforts coming from various sides on the basis of their mutually acceptable findings. Having in mind the precarious humanitarian situation in the conflict area, some time ago I worked out and handed over to my colleagues in the Trilateral Contact Group a draft document on the general modalities for consideration and appropriate action.

Touching upon conditions in the conflict region, I also suggest that, at the earliest possible point in time, plans and other necessary preparations should be made for the removal of unexploded ordinance and all other dangerous remnants of war, and these plans should be carried out as soon as the situation on the ground allows. In view of the high number of displaced persons, it is our understanding that more efforts need to be made to alleviate the suffering of the more than 1 million IDPs and refugees, victims of the conflict, and facilitate the creation of favourable conditions conducive to their return to their places of origin.

Let me finally return to what I said at the beginning. We seem to be at a crossroads where we either face the risk of a further escalation of the conflict or where common sense, responsibility and humanity shall prevail and we may be able to walk on the road to peace, as laid out by the four Heads of State and Government during their recent meeting in Minsk. In spite of the existing complexity of the situation, we will not give up our hopes and our engagement. I thank Council members for their attention and their support for all our endeavours.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Ambassador Tagliavini for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Apakan.

Mr. Apakan: I am grateful for this opportunity to brief the Council about the situation in Ukraine. Since the last time I addressed the Council (see S/PV.7311), a package of measures towards the peaceful solution of the conflict in eastern Ukraine has been agreed in Minsk. We welcome this agreement. We also welcome the declaration by the Normandy Powers — France, Germany, Russia and Ukraine — and their determination that the package of measures agreed in Minsk should be implemented in full. The Security Council has unanimously endorsed the package of measures and welcomed the declaration. We are working for their full implementation.

The Minsk package is an integrated whole, and foresees an immediate and unconditional ceasefire and a withdrawal of heavy weapons, followed by a political process involving local elections, as well as constitutional reform. The agreed ceasefire and the withdrawal of heavy weapons are now the priority and the basis for all other provisions of the Minsk documents. Nevertheless, immediately after the entry into force of the ceasefire, heavy attacks by rebels around the town of Debaltseve took place. This was an attempt to create new facts on the ground, and so to change the basis on which the latest package of measures had been agreed. These attacks were against the letter and the spirit of the Minsk agreements.

Today, I can report that in the past few days combat operations have been significantly reduced across the conflict zone, although some violence has still occurred around Donetsk airport, as well as close to the town of Mariupol. Over the past two days, we have also seen significant indications that both sides are now taking steps to comply with their responsibilities under the Minsk package. Concerning the withdrawal of heavy weapons, yesterday our monitors began observing the movement of heavy weapons away from

the line of contact in several instances. Despite the fact that the Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) was not able to establish the origin or final places of storage for those weapons, this is a welcome development. However, it is only the beginning of the process, and we encourage the sides to take more steps in that direction. The OSCE has been given some direct tasks related to implementation of the package of measures, one of which is that it will facilitate, monitor and verify the withdrawal of heavy weapons from a defined security zone.

The Special Monitoring Mission is ready to take on that responsibility in line with its mandate, but in order to fulfil that role we need improved baseline information. On 13 February, immediately after agreement was concluded on the package of measures, we wrote to the signatories to make clear what information we needed from them if the Mission were to conduct this work. That information should cover the heavy weapons they have, the current location of those weapons, the routes that will be used to withdraw them and their locations after they have been withdrawn. The parties have provided answers, but the information is not yet sufficient. The Mission has been monitoring the movement of heavy weapons for five months, but there is a clear distinction between that activity, which will continue, and our ability to verify that the weapons have indeed been withdrawn and safely and securely stored. The same requirement for baseline information applies to monitoring the withdrawal of foreign armed formations and mercenaries, another responsibility the OSCE has been given.

After expansion in line with our mandate, the Special Monitoring Mission currently has 451 monitors, of whom more than 300 are in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. In that context, it is important to note that the Mission remains a civilian mission that is being assigned tasks that come close to the purview of peacekeeping. Furthermore, the Mission's operations related to the Minsk package will not be confined to monitoring on or around a contact line. Our operations will take place in and around the entire defined security zone, which is more than 400 kilometres long and 140 kilometres wide and includes large parts of the Russian-Ukrainian State border. That huge area, approximately 50,000 square kilometres, will form the core of the Special Monitoring Mission's activities and will necessitate new operational capacities and processes.

Those new capacities include expanding the Mission's technological capacity and corresponding expert staff. Our monitors' work should be complemented with additional information-gathering means such as satellite imagery, the relocation of a large number of unmanned aerial vehicles and more image-gathering technology. Those elements have been established in the Minsk documents. In order to make this qualitative upgrade of the Mission's capacity, we will need close cooperation with the United Nations. We are also examining an expanded geographical capability for the four existing teams located in Luhansk, Donetsk, Kharkiv and Dnepropetrovsk, the areas of responsibility where we anticipate seeing the ceasefire and heavy weapon withdrawal zones. That may require establishing additional patrolling hubs to better cover the weapons withdrawal area.

The conclusion of the Minsk accords also gives hope for improvement in the humanitarian situation. To date, however, there are still more than a million internally displaced persons, some living in desperate circumstances. The conflict continues to take a heavy toll on the civilian population, particularly in and around the conflict zone. The Special Monitoring Mission, within the framework of its mandate, will not lose sight of that aspect of the conflict and will concentrate on related tasks throughout Ukraine. We will continue to facilitate humanitarian aid where possible and do our very best to be helpful to the population through our wide presence on the ground. This important work in the areas of human rights, gender and dialogue facilitation will help to consolidate the basis on which the political part of the Minsk agreements relies.

In conclusion, I should repeat that a full and unconditional ceasefire remains the foundation for further implementation of the Minsk accords. The Special Monitoring Mission can and will be helpful in this process and will implement its mandate impartially and in close cooperation with all sides. However, nothing can replace the firm political willingness on the part of all sides to achieve peace and normalization. The Minsk documents and President Poroshenko's peace plan remain the way forward for restoring peace and stability to Ukraine.

Lastly, I would also like to mention the valuable work of the Trilateral Contact Group and the efforts of Ambassador Heidi Tagliavini, with whom we are working closely and to whom we are grateful.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*). I thank Ambassador Apakan for his briefing.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Before adjourning the meeting, I would like to express the Chinese delegation's sincere appreciation to the members of the Council, especially my colleagues the Permanent Representatives, their staffs and the Secretariat of the Council, for all the support they have given us. It has indeed been a busy month, and one in which we rallied to arrive at a consensus on several important issues within our purview. We could not have done it alone or without the hard work, support and positive contributions of every delegation and the representatives of the Secretariat, as well as all the relevant conference service officers. As we end our presidency, I know I speak for the whole Council in wishing the delegation of France good luck in the month of March.

The meeting rose at 10.30 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.7396

Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7396th meeting
Tuesday, 3 March 2015, 10.45 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Delattre	(France)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Chad	Mr. Cherif
	Chile	Mr. Olguín Cigarroa
	China	Mr. Liu Jieyi
	Jordan	Mrs. Kawar
	Lithuania	Ms. Murmokaitė
	Malaysia	Mrs. Adnin
	New Zealand	Mr. McLay
	Nigeria	Mr. Sarki
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Wilson
	United States of America	Ms. Power
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Suárez Moreno

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

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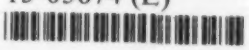

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The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

Expression of thanks to the outgoing President

The President (*spoke in French*): As this is the first meeting of the Security Council for the month of March 2015, I should like to take this opportunity to pay tribute, on behalf of the Council, to His Excellency Mr. Liu Jieyi, Permanent Representative of China, for his service as President of the Council for the month of February 2015. I am sure I speak for all members of the Council in expressing deep appreciation to Ambassador Liu and his team for the great skill and efficiency with which Council's business was conducted last month.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Australia, Luxembourg, Norway and South Sudan to participate in this meeting.

The Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2015/153, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Australia, Chile, France, Lithuania, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Norway, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Angola, Chad, Chile, China, France, Jordan, Lithuania, Malaysia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

The President (*spoke in French*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2206 (2015).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements after the vote.

Ms. Power (United States of America): For the past 14 months, the United States has supported the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the region in their efforts to facilitate talks between the warring parties in South Sudan aimed at reaching a comprehensive and inclusive peace agreement and establishing a transitional Government to oversee a process of reform that addresses the root causes of the conflict. While various papers have been signed, partial agreements entered into, promises made and assurances delivered, the situation has only worsened for the people of the United Nations newest country. The aspirations of the South Sudanese people have time and again been thwarted. Instead of pursuing the well-being of their people, a variety of individuals have chosen to place their own narrow political interests first, rather than making the compromises necessary to get to peace.

Resolution 2206 (2015), adopted today, supports IGAD's mediation efforts by laying the framework for targeted sanctions. Under the terms of the resolution, the parties must meet IGAD's deadlines for the resolution of all outstanding issues of the conflict and to begin the process of establishing a transitional Government of national unity. The consequences for not doing so could include the designation of senior individuals for asset freezes and travel bans, or the imposition of an arms embargo.

Having the resolution in place, with realistic deadlines based on IGAD's milestones for resolving the crisis, will, we hope, improve IGAD's chances of success in reaching a credible and sustainable peace. We are enhancing IGAD's leverage in the negotiations by sending the very clear signal to those who continue to choose war over peace that they will be held to account now, as we urge them to compromise to reach and agreement, and later, when they are considering whether to follow through on its terms.

Some have asked: Why adopt this resolution now, when IGAD is in the midst of another important negotiating round and when an agreement may well be around the corner? The answer is that the parties need to know not only that they will be held to account if they fail to compromise to reach agreement, but also that they will be held accountable on the back end if

they do again as they have done so many times before by failing to implement that to which they have signed.

Today, because of this conflict, 2.5 million people urgently need help with food, more than 2 million people have been displaced internally and as refugees by the violence, and the United Nations Mission in South Sudan, which was originally deployed to support the world's newest State, is now itself providing safe shelter to more than 100,000 internally displaced persons seeking refuge from violence perpetrated by the Government and the armed groups that oppose it. Rape and killing have become rampant, and just a few weeks ago we heard about the kidnapping of hundreds of young boys in Malakal by armed groups intending to use them as child soldiers.

Today in South Sudan, a young generation's future is quite literally being held ransom by political actors who, despite all costs, refuse to compromise. This cannot continue, and those who frustrate peace must begin to pay the price. That is why today's action by the Council is so important.

Mr. Liu Jieyi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): As today is the Security Council's first meeting of the month, I congratulate France on its assumption of the presidency of the Council. I believe that under your leadership, Sir, the Council will be able to complete its work for this month smoothly.

I should also like to thank the members of the Council for their support and cooperation during the Chinese presidency in February.

Both parties to the conflict in South Sudan are holding political negotiations in Ethiopia, under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). China supports the constructive role played by the Council in assisting the mediation efforts of IGAD. The Council has adopted resolution 2206 (2015), which sends a unanimous message to the parties aimed at helping IGAD in its push for a speedy breakthrough in the political negotiations. China appreciates the consultations being conducted by the two negotiating parties of South Sudan on the basis of the proposal put forward by IGAD, on which some progress has been made. China sincerely hopes that the two negotiating parties will reach a compromise as soon as possible on the pending issues in order to take a crucial step towards restoring peace and stability to South Sudan, which is in the fundamental and long-term interests of that country and its people.

While attending the special consultations in support of the IGAD-led South Sudan peace process in January, Foreign Minister Wang Yi put forward a four-point proposal for a settlement of the issue of South Sudan. We urge the parties to the conflict to end the fighting and violence forthwith and to establish a transitional Government as soon as possible. We firmly support IGAD in playing its mediation role in order to alleviate the humanitarian situation in South Sudan. We hope that resolution 2206 (2015) will truly help to achieve that goal.

We call on the international community to maintain its vigorous support for the good offices of IGAD and to support the countries of the region as they play their important role in addressing the issue of South Sudan. China is ready to join the interested parties within the international community in a tireless effort to promote peace, stability and development in South Sudan.

Mr. Sarki (Nigeria): Allow me first of all, Mr. President, to congratulate your delegation on its assumption of the presidency of the Council for this month. We sincerely look forward to working with you constructively towards the attainment of the programme of work that was unanimously adopted today.

We also wish to thank and commend the delegation of China for the leadership it gave to the Council in the month of February.

As we speak today, we are cognizant of the unanimous adoption of resolution 2206 (2015) by the Council. Our quest for peace and stability in South Sudan informed our decision to vote in favour of the resolution. We believe that the resolution addresses all the critical elements and issues that are impeding the return of the country to a state of normalcy. We expect it to send a strong message about the need for progress towards a peaceful resolution of the conflict in South Sudan. We stress once again that a military solution to the conflict is unattainable. Only a negotiated solution will bring lasting peace, stability and security to South Sudan.

African leaders are not standing by while the situation in South Sudan continues to deteriorate. The Prime Minister of Ethiopia and Chair of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) has met with the leaders of South Sudan, and in his remark, he made a very forceful observation that the world cannot stand by while the country continues to suffer.

Nigeria is encouraged therefore by the decision of His Excellency President Salva Kiir and of Mr. Riek Machar to engage in direct peace talks in Addis Ababa. We strongly urge both leaders to build on the progress made thus far in the IGAD-led peace process by demonstrating the political will to resolve all outstanding issues. We believe that a negotiated solution is within reach, and we look forward to a positive outcome from their talks, as the deadline of 5 March was agreed upon.

Mr. Iliichev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We, too, wish to congratulate the French delegation on the assumption of its presidential functions.

The Russian Federation voted in favour of resolution 2206 (2015), guided by the importance of supporting the Council's unity in the interest of settling the situation in South Sudan. However, we continue to feel that today's Security Council decision was hasty. No one should have any illusion that we unconditionally support the implementation of a sanctions regime against South Sudan. Our principled position is well known. We have never felt and do not feel that sanctions are an effective means for achieving a political settlement to a conflict. Today, as progress has been made in the negotiations between the warring sides, South Sudan continues to need understanding and unified support rather than pressure and threats, which could lead to the opposite result.

Moreover, we think that the practical implementation of the measures planned for by the sanctions regime would be counter-productive, at least so long as there is still hope to resolve the conflict through negotiations. Backing protagonists into a corner will not achieve anything. Restrictions can lead only to a hardening of the positions and further complicate the search for mutually acceptable solutions. In further considering the South Sudan dossier, we will have to refrain from rash decisions, especially because negotiations between the South Sudanese sides in Addis Ababa are ongoing, and any comprehensive measure taken by the Security Council will have to take into account how the truce plan, agreed upon with the African Union at the end of January, is being implemented.

In addition, the Council's decision to implement sanctions is being taken without a clear and unambiguous signal of support from key African players, first and foremost the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the African Union. This breaks with the practice whereby primacy in such matters is given to Africans themselves, as was the case with Guinea Bissau and the Central African Republic. In that regard, we recall that it has been clearly stated in a number of previous Security Council resolutions on South Sudan that possible sanctions measures against that country had to be considered by the Council in consultations with interested partners, including IGAD and the African Union.

Given the lack of unified support for sanctions against South Sudan by the African capitals, including those of South Sudan's neighbours, the implementation of a Council sanctions regime might be difficult, which could have a negative impact on the Council's credibility. The primary responsibility for such a possible negative scenario would lie with those who pushed for the adoption of today's resolution in spite of our warnings.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of South Sudan.

Mr. Deng (South Sudan): I would like to begin by congratulating you, Mr. President, on France's assumption of the presidency for this month. I would also like to acknowledge your predecessor's leadership of the Council last month.

I would now like to thank you, Mr. President, for granting me the opportunity to address the Security Council on the important issue of sanctions against my country. It would, however, be disingenuous of me to say that it is with great that pleasure that I do so.

It has been an open secret for some time that the United States was working on a draft resolutionesolution on sanctions against South Sudan. The reasons given for the threat of sanctions were the frustration and impatience of the international community with the lack of progress in the peace process. As I said in my statement to the Security Council on 25 November,

> "The frustration of the international community with the pace of talks in Addis Ababa is understandable, but a sustainable solution to the current crisis in South Sudan cannot be achieved by the imposition of sanctions" (S/*PV.7322, p. 2*).

In that statement, I went on to say,

> "It is a well-known fact that sanctions hardly ever achieve their intended objective. Instead, they only

> tend to harden positions towards confrontation rather than cooperation. We believe that the international community can play a positive role by engaging both parties constructively to expedite the conclusion of an agreement" (*ibid.*).

In any case, frustration cannot be a sound rationale for the Security Council to take such an important decision on issues pertaining to the maintenance of international peace and security. If, as is often said, the goal is not to target top leaders, but some middle-level individuals, more or less in a symbolic way, who may not be playing a pivotal role in the peace process, such a punishment may be an exercise in futility. On the other hand, punishing persons who are playing leading roles at this crucial juncture in the peace process could be counterproductive against the cause of peace. Prioritizing peace and accountability becomes a critical policy consideration.

If, as we have been made to understand, resolution 2206 (2015) is merely procedural, aimed at creating a framework for a sanctions regime and not at actually implementing sanctions, then it amounts to a threat. But a threat is meaningful only if it is credible, and if credibility means that sanctions will in fact be imposed if the parties do not make tangible progress towards peace, then the question is what positive impact such sanctions will have on the peace process. It has been repeatedly stated by Southern Sudanese leaders that sanctions threaten to undermine the peace process. The critical question is whether sanctions are a punishment for failure to make peace or an inducement for making peace. The implications of either are of critical importance. If they are a punishment, then the issue ends there. If they are an inducement, then they constitute a negative measure that can only generate a negative response and be counterproductive.

Early in December 2014, a high-level delegation of Minsters, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and the Minister in the Office of the President, visited Washington, D.C., to deliver a letter from President Salva Kiir to President Barack Obama, and then proceeded to New York to brief individual members of the Security Council, other ambassadors and senior United Nations officials on developments in the peace process. The objective of the visit was to impress upon Washington, D.C., and the United Nations that, contrary to popular perception, considerable progress had been made and was being made towards ending the conflict and restoring peace and national reconciliation. The ministers reported that most contentious issues had been resolved and that the two areas where there were still differences were the structure of the Government and power-sharing arrangements. They repeatedly stated that what South Sudan needed was understanding and support, not punishment.

It is truly ironic that while President Salva Kiir has made major concessions in negotiating with the rebel movement, whose declared objective is the overthrow of a popularly elected Government, he has mostly received criticism rather than appreciation for his magnanimity. Is South Sudan going to be better off with a change of Government in favour of the rebel leaders or without their elected leaders? That is a question the Council should reflect upon in earnest. I believe in constructive criticism, but it has to be precisely that — constructive and productive.

Recent republican orders issued by President Kiir confirm his determination to do all he can to end the senseless tragedy for his country. The President has issued three orders to that end. The first republican order grants amnesty to all those waging war against the State. Some will see this as evidence of impunity, which is widely condemned, but it should also be seen as a step towards peace and reconciliation, which are universally called for. The second republican order is a declaration of unilateral ceasefire by the Government, with strict instructions to the army to fight only in self-defence, if and when attacked. That places on the rebels the moral burden of choosing between pursuing war or making peace. The third Republican order gives directives for the implementation of the Arusha agreement of 23 January 2015 on the reunification of the SPLM.

Those republican orders should help build confidence among the three parties to the conflict — the Government, the SPLM in Opposition and the SPLM former detainees — and gain the support of the international community for an early end to violence. What the President and the Government of South Sudan need is encouragement and support, not condemnation.

A lesson could be drawn from the African Union Commission of Inquiry for South Sudan, chaired by former President Obasanjo. Its report has not been released, precisely because the leadership of the African Union fears that it might have a negative impact on the peace process. In any case, now that the Security Council

has adopted the resolution on sanctions, we hope that it will refrain from actually imposing sanctions and engage the parties in a constructive dialogue to bring a speedy end to the conflict.

The President (*spoke in French*): There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 11.10 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.7397

Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7397th meeting

Wednesday, 4 March 2015, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Delattre	(France)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Chad	Mr. Cherif
	Chile	Mr. Olguín Cigarroa
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	Jordan	Mr. Omaish
	Lithuania	Mr. Baublys
	Malaysia	Mr. Haniff
	New Zealand	Mr. McLay
	Nigeria	Mr. Laro
	Russian Federation	Mr. Safronkov
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Wilson
	United States of America	Mr. Klein
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Suárez Moreno

Agenda

Non-proliferation/Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Note by the President (S/2015/131)

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Non-proliferation/Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Note by the President (S/2015/131)

The President (*spoke in French*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2015/155, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by the United States of America.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/131, which contains a note by the President.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Angola, Chad, Chile, China, France, Jordan, Lithuania, Malaysia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

The President (*spoke in French*): The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2207 (2015).

The meeting rose at 10.05 a.m.

S/PV.7398

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United Nations S/PV.7398

Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7398th meeting
Wednesday, 4 March 2015, 10.10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Delattre	(France)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Chad	Mr. Cherif
	Chile	Mr. Olguín Cigarroa
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	Jordan	Mrs. Kawar
	Lithuania	Mr. Baublys
	Malaysia	Mr. Haniff
	New Zealand	Mr. McLay
	Nigeria	Mr. Laro
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Wilson
	United States of America	Ms. Power
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Suárez Moreno

Agenda

The situation in Libya

Letter dated 23 February 2015 from the Panel of Experts established pursuant to resolution 1973 (2011) addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2015/128)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (S/2015/144)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Libya

Letter dated 23 February 2015 from the Panel of Experts established pursuant to resolution 1973 (2011) addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2015/128)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (S/2015/144)

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Libya to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Bernardino León, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, to participate in this meeting. On behalf of the Council, I welcome Mr. León, who is joining today's meeting via video-teleconference from Rome.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/144, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya. I also wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/128, a letter dated 23 February 2015 from the Panel of Experts established pursuant to resolution 1973 (2011) addressed to the President of the Security Council.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear briefings by Mr. Bernardino León and by Ambassador Hussein Haniff, Permanent Representative of Malaysia, in his capacity as the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011).

I now give the floor to Mr. León.

Mr. León: By now, the Council will have received the Secretary-General's special report on the strategic assessment of the United Nations presence in Libya (S/2015/113), as well as the Secretary-General's report on the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (S/2015/144), detailing the Mission's work over the past six months.

Two weeks ago, I briefed the Security Council (see S/PV.7387) in the aftermath of the horrific beheadings by Islamic State-affiliated elements of 21 men, including 20 Egyptian nationals. That was a crime so heinous and vile, yet its perpetrators showed no misgivings about presenting the world with images of their brutal and base barbarity. On 20 February, two days after my briefing to the Council, Libyans were again reminded of the lengths to which terrorists and extremists will go. A car bomb in Al-Qubba, the home town of House of Representatives President Agila Gwaider, left 44 people dead, according to official figures released by the Government. That is the highest number of fatalities recorded as a result of any single act of terrorism in Libya. Even in the current climate of political polarization and armed hostilities, the nature and scale of that attack shocked all Libyans, irrespective of political affiliations. Across political divisions, condemnation was swift and unequivocal.

I have no doubt that the attack in Al-Qubba, coming only days before a planned round of dialogue talks, was a blatant attempt to derail any opportunity of Libyans coming together to forge consensus on a peaceful solution to the political crisis and the military conflict that has gripped their country for much of the past year. I also have no doubt that terrorist groups such as Islamic State will stop at nothing in their bid to play on existing political divisions and the sense of mutual mistrust among the main political stakeholders in order to consolidate their own presence and influence in Libya.

The sense of fear and concern within Libya regarding the threat of terrorism is very palpable. In meetings I had over the past week, Libya's counterparts expressed grave concern about the danger that terrorism posed to Libya's security and stability, and about the very limited capacities of the Libyan State to effectively confront that challenge. It is crucial to create the right conditions to address that threat. At the same time, we should be ready to support Libyan efforts to tackle terrorism and extremism. We should be careful not to underestimate the sense of urgency and alarm underpinning that request for international support on addressing the threat of terrorism.

Earlier this week, I held a new round of consultations with Libyan political leaders in Tobruk

and Tripoli. Both sides have since delivered a clear and resounding message that terrorism will not be allowed to prevail or hold hostage the dialogue process. Following the conclusion of a seven-day mourning period announced by the House of Representatives in the aftermath of the latest terrorist attack, the House formally voted to resume participation in the dialogue talks. Tomorrow, dialogue teams representing the major political stakeholders will convene in Morocco to advance discussions with respect to proposals on the three key agenda items.

The first item relates to the formation of a national unity Government under whose umbrella Libyans can adopt a unified approach to address the huge political, security and economic challenges facing Libya. The second will address security arrangements to pave the way for a comprehensive ceasefire, the phased withdrawal of all armed groups from towns and cities, measures for weapons and arms control, and adequate monitoring and implementation mechanisms. The third is related to the completion of the constitution-drafting process and the need for clear timelines in that regard.

To galvanize broader support for the ongoing talks, UNSMIL will next week convene two other dialogue meetings. The first meeting, in Algeria, will bring together a range of prominent Libyan political leaders and activists. The second meeting, in Brussels, will draw together municipal representatives from across Libya to further the implementation of the confidence-building measures previously agreed in Geneva. Later on, we will convene a meeting of tribal leaders, very probably in Egypt.

While I am confident that there is sufficient political will and determination on all sides to reach a comprehensive political settlement, I cannot overstate the challenges facing the process. Foremost among those is the fluid security situation, as the warring parties continue to engage in reciprocal attacks against each other in different parts of the country. We have repeatedly called on all parties, particularly on the military front, to desist from taking any action that would risk escalating tensions.

Yesterday's and today's attacks by both sides on public infrastructure and facilities, including airports, coming a day after the different parties recommitted themselves to resume the dialogue talks, is unacceptable, reckless and totally uncalled for. The escalation calls into question the commitment of those responsible behind those latest acts of aggression, and is a stark reminder that more needs to be done on the security front. I call on Libya's political leadership to take all the necessary measures to prevent any further attacks, and to exercise its authority in line with its legal and political responsibilities to ensure that all forces operating under its command comply with the political commitment it has made with respect to the dialogue.

Moreover, the systematic campaign of misinformation that recently surfaced in various Libyan media outlets regarding the dialogue and its outcomes is symptomatic of the deep mistrust that continues to manifest itself on the Libyan political landscape.Only a few days ago I met with a sizeable number of members of the House of Representatives to discuss the dialogue process and dissipate doubts regarding its scope and transparency. In that context, I would like to take this opportunity to once again reiterate the assurances I have given publicly and in private to all parties in Libya that this is a Libyan-Libyan dialogue that is anchored in the principle of mutual consensus among the parties. The role of the United Nations has been to facilitate the talks without any imposition, while maintaining the utmost respect for Libyan ownership of the process. In our efforts to ensure transparency of the process, every participant will be required to consult with its respective constituency before any final agreement is formally endorsed.

On behalf of the Secretary-General, allow me to take this opportunity to express my thanks and appreciation to the Council for its unwavering support to the Libyan political dialogue, as well as to all Member States and other international partners that have been generous in extending financial, logistical and other support to the process.

Within just the span of a few weeks since the first round of talks convened, on 15 January, Libya's political leaders have come a long way towards injecting hope that an end to their country's political crisis and armed conflict is possible. The sense of expectation and anticipation on the part of all segments of the Libyan population is profound. While the onus remains on Libya's leaders to agree on a road map for a resumption of the political process and an end to the conflict, the support of the international community will be critical to the successful implementation of a political agreement, should the parties conclude one.

The ability of a Government of national unity to govern effectively and deliver a notable change in the lives of ordinary Libyans, however, will be

largely dependent upon our collective ability, as the international community, to rethink and articulate a clear strategy for delivering technical assistance. The limited progress made over the past three years towards building capacities at all levels in the Libyan State should serve as a stark warning of the huge challenges ahead.

The worsening humanitarian situation in the country, including in Warshafana, Benghazi and Nafusa, calls for a stronger commitment on the part of the international community to addressing the needs of the people who have been victims of this conflict. In Geneva, representatives of municipal and local councils agreed on a set of confidence-building measures, and we must step up our efforts to implement those and start making a difference in the lives of the Libyan people. The international community should also move quickly to present a clearly articulated strategy in support of the Libyan State and the efforts of the national unity Government to combat the growing threat of terrorism. I believe that will be key to allaying the growing concerns across Libya about what is perceived as the real and imminent danger that extremist groups such as the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant pose to Libya's overall security and stability.

The overall situation on the ground is deteriorating rapidly, and Libya can no longer afford to allow the political crisis and armed conflict that have gripped the country for much of the past year to continue to fester. Unless Libya's leaders act quickly and decisively, the risks to their country's national unity and territorial integrity are real and imminent. As difficult as the past few years may have been for their country, the Libyan people have not given up on their hopes and aspirations for a modern Libyan democratic State based on the rule of law and respect for human rights. Tomorrow's meeting in Morocco is an important opportunity to honour the sacrifices that they have made in their quest for a life of dignity and respect and a country that safeguards the interests of future generations. Difficult decisions and compromises will be needed. But Libya's leaders must be assured that as they make those decisions, the United Nations and the international community will be their partners in the difficult journey ahead.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. León for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Haniff.

Mr. Haniff (Malaysia): In accordance with paragraph 24 (e) of resolution 1970 (2011), of 26 February 2011, I have the honour to report to the Security Council on the work of its Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), concerning Libya. My report covers the period from 18 December 2014 to 4 March 2015, during which time the members of the Committee met once in informal consultations.

At the outset, I would like to touch briefly on the final report (S/2015/128) of the Panel of Experts established pursuant to resolution 1973 (2011) and most recently extended by resolution 2144 (2014), which the Committee received on 4 February. As the report is now publicly available, I will confine my remarks to a few highlights from it. The Panel concluded that weak implementation of the arms embargo, high demand for arms, and the amount of resources available to the fighting parties to procure materiel indicated that large-scale trafficking was likely to continue and had the potential to contribute to a lasting conflict with no clear militarily dominant party. The Panel also reported on the diversion of military materiel, including materiel exempted by the Committee and non-lethal military materiel, to armed groups on both sides of the political divide. It also highlighted the difficulties in differentiating between authorized and illicit transfers of arms and related materiel. The Panel further reported on significant security challenges, particularly in relation to terrorism, Libya's neighbours and countries in the Sahel, owing to arms proliferation. It concluded that arms and related materiel originating from Libya had also significantly reinforced the military capacity of terrorist groups operating in those countries.

Concerning the travel ban, the Panel reported on violations of the measure by two listed individuals. With regard to the assets freeze, the Panel believes that large amounts of assets are likely being held outside Libya under false names and by front companies. It also continued to identify Member States lacking the capacity to implement the assets freeze, due to gaps in domestic legislation and the relevant constitutional framework, and cautioned that a number of fraudulent attempts were being made to recover looted Libyan assets. Concerning measures related to attempts to illegally export crude oil from Libya, the Panel noted that while exports of crude oil not under the control of the Libyan Government had probably taken place, no requests for designation of the transporting vessels had been made by the Government. It further found that in

addition to crude oil, its derivatives and other natural resources were also subject to illegal export.

The Committee discussed the report and recommendations of the Panel of Experts in informal consultations on 20 February. The report was generally well received and lauded for its detailed information. The main points that emerged from the discussion were concern about the reported arms-embargo violations and the Panel's lack of access to Libya and other countries with pending requests, and how to carry the Panel's recommendations forward. Of the 18 recommendations, the Committee agreed to take follow-up action on six. Of the remaining 12 recommendations, 1 pertaining to the designation of individuals first requires action on the part of the sponsoring Member State, while the other 11 were addressed to the Security Council.

I would now like to provide a brief update on the Committee's activities following up on its meeting of 14 November 2014, with Libya and regional States participating. On 4 February, the Committee wrote to Mr. Bernardino Léon, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, inviting him to brief it. On 23 and 26 February, the Committee wrote to the Permanent Representative of Libya to the United Nations regarding access to the Panel's report, then still unpublished.

During the reporting period the Committee also dealt with various aspects of the arms embargo. In that regard, it replied to a Member State concerning the disposal of seized military materiel and received an inspection report on a new seizure, provided guidance to a Member State on proceeding with a previously exempted arms transfer to Libya and sought additional information from a Member State regarding an intended transfer of non-lethal military materiel to Libya.

As anticipated in the last periodic report to the Council, the Committee send a letter to the Permanent Mission of Libya to the United Nations conveying information it had received from a Member State on an arms embargo matter in response to the Committee's queries on the subject. The Committee further took note of the change in the focal point authorized to sign off on arms embargo exemption requests an end-user certificates on behalf of the Libyan Government. Such requests must now bear the signature of the Chief of Staff of the Libyan Army and be certified by the Permanent Representative of Libya to the United Nations.

Lastly, since the last periodic report to the Council, the Committee received one notification under paragraph 19 (a) of resolution 1970 (2011) in connection with the basic expenses exemption to the assets freeze, on which no negative position was taken.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Ambassador Haniff for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Libya.

Mr. Dabbashi (Libya) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on France's accession to the presidency of the Security Council this month. I thank you and the members of the Council for providing me with this opportunity to address the Council.

I thank Mr. Bernardino León, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his comprehensive briefing and I wish him the greatest of success in his efforts. I also wish to thank Ambassador Hussein Haniff, Permanent Representative of Malaysia and Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1970 (2011), for his briefing. I wish him and his delegation the greatest of success in leading the work of the Committee throughout his chairmanship.

I would like to re-emphasize that, when discussing the work of that Committee, there is a need for transparency and cooperation in the relationships between the Libyan Mission to the United Nations and the Sanctions Committee because the legitimate Libyan authorities, as I have previously said, are a partner of the Security Council in guaranteeing that the arms embargo is not violated by non-State parties or terrorist organizations. We hope to receive the reports of the Panel of Experts in a timely manner so that we can share that share them with experts in our Government before they are submitted to the Council. We hope that the Committee will take that into consideration in the future.

Considering that the Libyan Army is waging a war against terrorist organizations in Libya, some of which have declared their loyalty to the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham, it is in the interest of peace and security not only in Libya but also in the broader region to facilitate the procedure for the Libyan army to obtain weapons, either by lifting the embargo completely or

by facilitating the procedures for exemptions from the embargo. We have informed the Sanctions Committee of the new procedures adopted by the provisional Libyan Government to guarantee that the weapons exempt from the arms embargo will not reach no other party except the Libyan army. The procedures include limiting the points of contact to one, as the Chair of the Sanctions Committee mentioned. That focal point is the Chief of Staff of the Libyan army and the Libyan Mission to the United Nations in New York. This procedure was adopted in response to the wishes of some members of the Sanctions Committee. The Libyan Army is ready to accept an observer to ensure that the weapons approved by the Committee are in effect delivered to the official Libyan Army.

Allow me also to commend the efforts of the Panel of Experts of the Sanctions Committee, as well as the clear and objective report submitted to the Council (S/2015/128), which addresses the relevant topics from all sides and clearly indicates that that the Libya Dawn militias are responsible for derailing the political process. It also lists the damage inflicted on the country and indicates the responsibility of some leaders of that militia. At the same time, the report also refutes the allegations that the Libyan Air Force was responsible for losses among civilians.

The report of the Panel of Experts differs from report of the Secretary-General (S/2015/144), which uses the same terminology as the Libya Dawn militias and tries to ignore the existence and presence of the Libyan army and its achievements in Benghazi. I take this opportunity to repeat what I have said before at the Security Council. No country has the right to intervene in the decisions of the elected Libyan authorities concerning the identity of the leaders of the Libyan army or State institutions.

We have reached a stage where it is no longer possible to overlook the acts of terrorism being committed in Libya against civilians, the legitimate authorities, State institutions and economic facilities. I want to make it very clear that the silence of the international community in the face of the terrorist organizations overtaking the cities of Derna and Benghazi has encouraged those organizations and their allies to take over the capital Tripoli. The silence in the face of the destruction by these organizations of the international airport in Tripoli, their overrunning of State institutions and expulsion of the legitimate Government therefrom has encouraged the militias to continue the war in order to take control of the country's oil resources, especially after the Libyan army succeeded in expelling the militias from most neighbourhoods of Benghazi and halted their progress in the western mountains.

Terrorism is not merely an ideology; it is first and foremost action. The definition of terrorism in the Arab Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism is any action that causes harm to the environment, damages or occupies a public or private facility or property, or exposes national resources to danger. This definition of terrorism by the Arab Convention is what led the Libyan House of Representatives to classify Libya Dawn alliance as a terrorist militia. I do not believe that anyone would dispute that it applies perfectly to the actions of that coalition in burning the Tripoli Airport, the Tripoli neighbourhoods of Zintan and Warshafana, and the houses of Government officials, in overtaking State institutions in the capital and in attacking the oil crescent. The House of Representatives was therefore not wrong at all, in spite of objections by some members of the Security Council.

The Libyan people feel that the international community has failed them, given its lack of adequate support for the elected House of Representatives and the Government it established, and given the silence of certain countries that back the militias that are seeking to defeat and eliminate the legislature, including hteir encouragement of the militias to continue their occupation of the capital, Tripoli, and the institutions of State. Indeed, some have misrepresented the truth and overlooked crimes in order to perpetuate the prevailing situation.

A representative of one permanent member of the Council was not ashamed to claim that one militia allied with Ansar al-Sharia was the only party combating terrorism in Libya. If he was asserting the opinion of his Government, I challenge him and his Government to persuade those militias to announce their disengagement and dissociation from Ansar al-Sharia or to describe Ansar al-Sharia as a terrorist organization, as the Council itself has done. Such statements require an official apology from that Government to the Libyan people. It is quite clear that a certain permanent member does not wish the legitimate authorities to reclaim the capital, and is pursuing that agenda by providing political support to certain militias and by objecting to the arming of the Libyan army. Such behaviour raises many questions among the

Libyan people, which aspires to restoring peace and security and to ending the bloodshed.

I should like to share some of the analysis now current within political and cultural circles in Libya. According to this analysis, the State to which I refer is either planning, with its proxies, the division of Libya or is trying to pave the way for its citizens of Libyan descent to take control of Libya on the grounds that they represent the majority of the leadership of the so-called Islamist movement. Whatever the objectives may be, they do not serve peace and security in Libya or anywhere else, and are not compatible with its responsibility as a permanent member of the Security Council. Such conduct will damage the good relations that have emerged between our two countries in recent years.

Other States, including members of the Security Council and Libya's neighbours in the region, that have not responded to the request of the legitimate Libyan Government to replace their accredited ambassadors. They are thereby, in practical terms, establishing diplomatic relations with the militias controlling the capital, which are in alliance with Ansar al-Sharia. The Libyan Government could well be compelled to take the necessary steps to correct this situation, even if it should mean suspending relations with those States.

Any delay in restoring legitimate authority over State institutions in the capital and in expanding State authority throughout the national territory can only reflect support for ongoing violations of human rights, including the forced expulsions of Libyan citizens from Warshafana, Tawergha and several other Libyan villages. It will compel hundreds of thousands of Libyan refugees to continue to suffer in dire conditions in neighbouring countries, where their children are deprived of schooling.

The resolution of such tragedies cannot be tied to the outcome of a national dialogue that remains hostage to the whims and desires of militias that survive on crime and enjoy demeaning and humiliating Libyans, and that have emptied the country of intellectuals, political activists and tourists, who have fled under threat. Efforts to address the security situation and combat terrorism must not remain hostage to the success of the national dialogue. They should be undertaken in parallel with the dialogue if we wish to prevent Libya from falling under the total control of terrorists and to stop terrorism from spreading throughout the region.

The Libyan people look forward to Mr. León's successful persuasion of the militia leaders, as opposed to the political leaders, to accept the formation of a Government of national unity consisting of Libyans who do not hold foreign passports or citizenship, and that would be ratified and supported by the entire membership of the House of Representatives. The Government would assume its functions in the capital at a date certain once all the militias have withdrawn and once it enjoys the security necessary to carry out its tasks without threat of force.

I stress that, for the first time since 2011, there is a legitimate Government in Libya that is not amenable to the threats and extortion of the militias. This could not have come about without the regrouping and reorganization of some units of the army in the eastern part of the country. The performance and achievements of the Government would still be weak and fall short of the expectations of the Libyan people and the international community if that had not occurred, yet objective circumstances prevent it from meeting the aspirations of the Libyan people, including the fact that it is not working from its seat and offices in the capital and that it is unfortunately operating on a war footing with a limited staff, few financial resources and very little support from the international community.

The Government cannot be prohibited from obtaining the weapons and other military equipment needed to strengthen the capacity of army and the security apparatus while blaming it for its inability to control the security situation internally and at the borders or to stop the flow of weapons inside and outside the country.

The Libyan army leadership has presented specific requests to the Sanctions Committee for exemptions from the arms embargo designed to strengthen the capacity of the Libyan air force to monitor Libyan territory and borders and prevent the terrorists from taking over oil fields and related facilities, in order to protect the wealth of the country. In the next few days, we will see how serious the Security Council is in terms of its concern about the security and stability of Libya and the region. From now on, the Libyan people will no longer accept a position of neutrality on the issue of the legitimate authorities versus the terrorist organizations. It will not accept any State that claims to want the best for Libya while continuing to provide the Libyan Dawn militias with weapons and political and media support. The Council's position and that of the United Nations

Mission in Libya must be very clear to those who do so. And it must be in line with Council resolutions, especially resolutions 1373 (2001) and 2174 (2014). Those who want to be Libya's partner and an honest broker must listen to the legitimate Libyan authorities, who were properly elected, and must respect Libyans' interests and wishes, as expressed through elections.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.50 a.m.